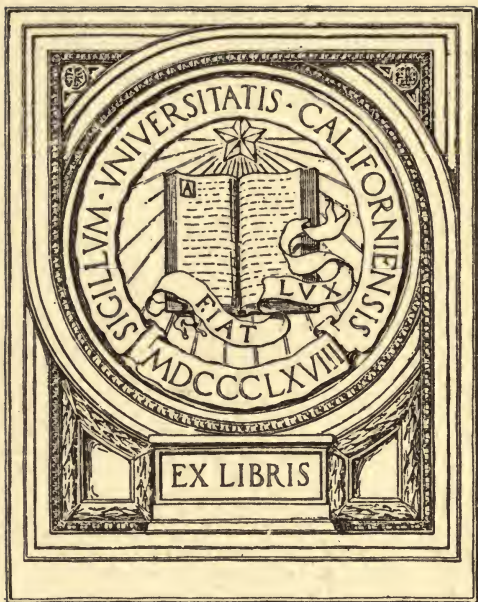


The
Sonnets of Shakespeare
New Light and Old Evidence

Countess de Chambrun



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The Sonnets of
William Shakespeare

New Light and Old Evidence

William Shakespeare

From the Bust at the Garrick Club

By Courtesy of the Garrick Club and the Shakespeare Head Press

The Countess de Chambrun (See page 64)

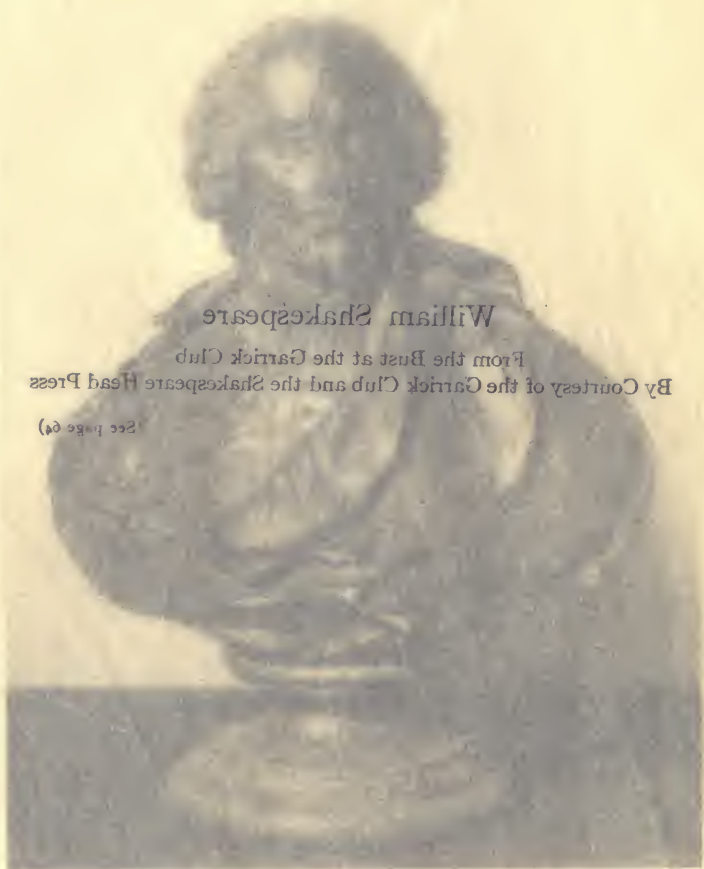
Illustrated

G. P. Putnam's Sons
New York and London
The Knickerbocker Press

1913

William Shakespeare
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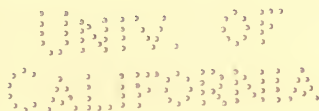
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William Shakespeare

New Light and Old Evidence

By

The Countess de Chambrun

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New York and London
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1913

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BY
CLARA LONGWORTH DE CHAMBRUN

TO VINU
ABSONIAO

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

IN REVERENTIAL MEMORY

OF MY

GRANDFATHER

JOSEPH LONGWORTH

BORN IN CINCINNATI

OCTOBER 2ND, 1813

DIED AT ROOKWOOD

DECEMBER 29TH, 1883

THIS BOOK IS WRITTEN

PREFACE

ANY writer who offers new ideas to the public on such a well-worn theme as the "Shakespeare problem," so called, is sure to encounter criticism, merely for writing on Shakespeare; because, so runs the stock phrase, "such a number of books have already been made on this subject."

Like many platitudes, this one contains only a half-truth. Though good books on the sonnets exist, the best being probably by Gerald Massey and Professor Tyler, these works have been out of print for twenty years. It is even difficult to obtain a casual reading of either, owing to the scarcity of copies in the public libraries. The earliest published biography of Shakespeare, Rowe's *Life*, is even more difficult to obtain, and, being the chief source from which we draw our knowledge of the poet and his works, I have appended it, *in extenso*, to this volume.

Largely owing to the efforts of Mr. Gerald

Massey, the pioneer sonnet-critic, much important evidence has recently been brought to light, so that his *Drama of the Sonnets* is no longer "up to date" with modern criticism and research. I have found, in following some of his clues to their historical source, much that is new in this connection, contained in documents so old as to be often contemporary with Shakespeare himself.

Should my grouping of the sonnets seem audacious, it may be remembered that their first publisher only claimed to give the public a large number of Shakespeare's minor poems, as they reached his hands (probably from three distinct sources). I disclaim, in altering Thorpe's arrangement, any attempt to alter Shakespeare.

In my judgment, every lover and student of these poems has as good a right to change the order in which they are printed as their first pirate-publisher, even a better right, if by so doing their interest is enhanced and their meaning clarified.

I am the more emboldened to set down the sonnets according to my own views, because on broad general lines they concord with the opinions of Professor Dowden, Mr. Acheson, and Mrs.

Stopes. I believe that the present arrangement will be found satisfactory to the amateur, as it is founded on the rules of simplicity and common sense, which place a reconciliation *after*, and not *before*, a quarrel.

Mr. Acheson has had the great kindness to offer me his own arrangement, which is divided into seven books, each of which should contain twenty sonnets. My best thanks are due to him not only for this, but also for a most interesting and valuable correspondence, and the immense moral support of his commendation.

Mr. Acheson has promised us his own version of the sonnets later, for which he will give those "reasons of settled gravity" that his mastery of Elizabethan literary history entitles him to pronounce with an authority far other than I could pretend to.

When facts are quoted, it may be understood that they are sanctioned by Sir Sidney Lee, whose clear exposition and scholarly research have made his *Life* the generally accepted authority on the time of Shakespeare.

Older authorities are named, when cited in the

text. They are long since gone beyond the reach of any rash censure, or gratitude that could be here expressed.

To the director and staff of the Congressional Library at Washington for their generous courtesy, and most especially to Charles Coleman, Esq., of the reading-room, whose sympathy and zeal in the search for elusive texts have been invaluable to me, I should like to render my appreciative thanks. I take also this opportunity of mentioning my indebtedness to Eugene F. Bliss, Esq., of Cincinnati, for his critical counsel and useful help.

CLARA LONGWORTH DE CHAMBRUN.

ROOKWOOD, October 2, 1913.

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Chapter I

Shakespeare and his Early Poems

CHAPTER I

SHAKESPEARE AND HIS EARLY POEMS

SIR HENRY IRVING, the actor, was once reproached by an eminent Baconian, for that, being a man so lettered, he had not studied the case of Bacon *versus* Shakespeare. Irving replied: "But I have *read* Shakespeare."

In a modified form, the same might be said in the present case, for while, during the last five years, I have been engaged in the study of Shakespeariana of all kinds, and consequently have not been able to avoid Bacon, any claim which I may have to write on this subject is based on a constant reading of the works popularly attributed to William Shakespeare of Stratford, and particularly on a lifelong interest in his sonnets.

The amateur reader, unwilling to wade through some fifty tomes of controversy over their author, their inspirer, or their "begetter," and led to suppose that these poems are too obscure to be appre-

ciated except by the erudite, will find in the following pages, together with a brief exposition of the various theories relating to the sonnets, a key to their mystery, which will, I trust, facilitate his understanding and appreciation of one of the most fascinating problems in literature.

What follows, then, is dedicated, without further apology, to that amateur reader, "to witness duty" to the immortal poet, "not to show my wit," in the hope that a few words of explanation and annotation may stimulate his interest, and satisfy his curiosity.

All the noted Shakespearian scholars are prone to look for evidences of the poet's personality in his later and greatest works. Undoubtedly we find in *King Lear* and *The Tempest* a sureness of touch and breadth of genius which appear but by flashes in the early poems; but we must not forget that all youthful productions are apt to be personal and subjective. It is only when an author's genius is fully matured that he learns to "keep himself out of his work"; therefore, to study Shakespeare's character we must go to his formative period, that of the early poems and comedies.

Shakespeare and his Early Poems 5

Few realise how essentially "modern" the great dramatist was in seizing upon the subject uppermost in the public mind. Shylock was produced during a wave of anti-Semitism, following the trial and conviction of the Queen's Jewish physician, Roderigo Lopez,¹ for attempted poisoning. Julius Cæsar reflected the conspiracy of the romantic and unfortunate Earl of Essex, just as Hamlet shadowed forth the character and personality of that ill-fated young man. The more we study Elizabethan times, the more we perceive that Shakespeare's subjects were almost "topical." No wonder that he made a financial success, for, as Irving said, he must have been the king of actor-managers.

I have tried, in the development of any hypothesis more or less my own, to suit such a theory to the facts, thereby reversing the usual procedure of the Shakespearian critic, which consists in forming an opinion and twisting or suppressing facts to fit his particular view.

¹ "The last day of February 1593, Rodericke Lopez, a Portingale, professing Physicke, was arraigned and found guilty of high Treason for conspiring her Majesty's destruction by Poyson, executed June 7."—*Stowe's Annals*.

The result of my reading leads me to see some truth in all theories seriously advanced, from which I except only three, the "Impersonal," the "Baconian," and the "Decadent."

Wordsworth says of the sonnet, "With this key, Shakespeare unlocked his heart." Although realising the weight of an objection frequently made by critics: "Can we suppose that any artistic work could be so completely autobiographic in detail?", I emphatically endorse the personal theory of the sonnets.

We should remember that these poems were not intended by their author for publication. He says in one:

I will not praise that purpose not to sell,

and in No. 112, addressing his friend and patron:

You are my all-the-world, and I must strive
 To know my shames and praises from your tongue. . .
 In so profound abysm I throw all care
 Of others' voices, that my adder's sense
 To CRITIC and to FLATTERER stoppèd are.

The very fact that the author sometimes sins against art and good taste shows that he used the sonnets not only as a personal and private tribute

but as a moral safety-valve. Absolute sincerity and realism constitute their vital appeal to us of the present day.

Browning, a distinguished upholder of the impersonal theory, tries to point his moral by writing a poem on the same tragic subject; but this "piece of life," although written in the first person, carries so little conviction, rings so untrue, that when the dramatic climax is reached, and the author would astonish his reader by exclaiming:

"Now, Robert Browning, you writer of plays,
Here 's a subject fit for your hand—"

the reader, far from being surprised, placidly closes the book, remarking, "Of course, I knew he was 'only pretending' all the time."

I shall not dwell long upon the refutation of the Baconian theory. The grave but well-argued fallacies of Mr. Greenwood's book, *Shakespeare Problem Restated*, cannot stand against the facts. Their best answer is in the restatement of those facts which the author ignores or perverts. Nor shall I notice the merits of the cryptogram further

than to remark that as its significance depends solely upon the juxtaposition of printed capitals and italics, the typesetter, not the author, was responsible for any coincidence.

One interesting book has been contributed to Baconian literature by Mark Twain. If only for its charming brilliancy of style, *Is Shakespeare Dead?* is well worth reading.

In its culminating argument, Mark Twain hurls ridicule and invective at Shakespeare's epitaph, by way of proving that no one who penned such lines could have produced the plays.

It seems curious that one who denies *all* Shakespearian authorship should unquestioningly accept these lines as being by Shakespeare! What was written during the actor's lifetime, he says, was surely written by Bacon. Lines written after his death were certainly by his own hand.

Now tradition, which ascribes to William Shakespeare of Stratford the authorship of the plays and poems, also attributes to him the desire of having these lines cut on his tombstone, in order to preserve his grave from desecration. (I shall show later, that this thought haunted Shake-

speare's imagination, and is frequently mentioned elsewhere.) We who believe in the former well-authenticated tradition may accept this one also, without being stigmatised as credulous. But surely, one who denies the force of *all* traditional evidence has no right to select the most improbable as alone worthy of belief!

Personally, I consider these lines almost as much an exemplification of their author's genius as more poetic works. They were written with an object, by one who knew men, the ignorant no less than the cultured. Their simple appeal is far more eloquent than a poetic effusion, and more likely to reach the man who might be some day called upon to fling his bones into the common charnel. If the proof of art is success, let it be sufficient to say that this epitaph has accomplished its purpose during three hundred years, and is doing so to-day! William Shakespeare's bones still rest in peace at Stratford, while those of kings, soldiers, statesmen, regicides, those of Cromwell himself,

"Spurned from hallowed ground" were
 "Flung like base carrion, to the hound."

Mark Twain refrains with admirable discretion

from quoting Bacon's only known lyric, to show us what *he* could do! For the sake of his argument he does well to be silent upon this effusion, for here are the concluding stanzas:

Domestick cares afflict the husband's bed,
Or pains his head,
Those that live single, take it for a curse,
Or do things worse.
Some would have children, those that have them mone,
Or wish them gone.
What is it then, to have or have no wife,
But single thraldom, or a double strife?

Our own affections, still at home to please,
Is a disease;
To crosse the sea to any foreine soyle,
Perills and toyle.
Warres, with their noise affright us, when they cease,
'Ware worse in peace.
What then remains? but that we still should cry
Not to be born, or being born, to die.

Without discussing the high poetic flight of this emanation, compare its cheap cynicism to the wholesome outlook on life in the works of Shakespeare.

Taking momentarily for granted the authorship of William Shakespeare and the application of the sonnets to his own life, the principal point of in-

terest is naturally to discover the identity of the person or persons addressed in these poems.

In this field of research we again find a large number of critics, and great diversity of opinion.

Mr. Gerald Massey, Mr. Acheson, and Sir Sidney Lee are confident that the old tradition which identifies the Earl of Southampton with the youth of the sonnets and also as "patron" of the earliest poems is the true hypothesis. Others, among whom the most eminent are probably Professor Tyler and Professor Dowden, and, in our day, Professor Brandes, seem assured that, in spite of a discrepancy in dates, William Herbert, afterwards Earl of Pembroke, was described by Shakespeare in the sonnets as the youth, while his mistress, Mary Fitton, figured as the *Dark Lady*, although the fair Maid of Honour was a grey-eyed blonde. Mr. Massey, certain of the Southampton theory, suggests Sidney's famous "Stella," the beautiful Penelope Rich, as the dark siren, while a more recent critic has discovered that Richard Field's wife was named Jacqueline, must have therefore been French, hence brunette, hence

immoral, and, in consequence of all this, Shakespeare's mistress!

Before examining the relative merits of the rival arguments, we should look back on the circumstances in Shakespeare's life, and breathe for a moment that atmosphere which pervades the sonnets.

John Shakespeare and his wife, Mary Arden, have an eldest son, William, born in Stratford-on-Avon in 1564. Nine other boys and girls are born to this couple. From having been quite an influential citizen, and member of the town council, John Shakespeare "strikes a streak of bad luck," becomes steeped in debt, mortgages his property and with difficulty maintains his family by his trades of wool merchant, leather dealer, and possibly butcher. At a little over eighteen, William Shakespeare contracts a hasty marriage with a woman eight years his senior, Anne Hathaway, of the neighbouring village of Shottery. Three children are born of this marriage, and not long after, probably in 1585 or '86, he leaves Stratford for London, where we find him seeking fortune for

himself and his family as a nondescript hanger-on, or, as a contemporary pamphleteer says, a "Johannes factotum" of the theatre. His flight from Stratford is ascribed by tradition to a difficulty with the local magistrate, whom we find caricatured later as Justice Shallow. There is no reason whatever to discredit the deer-stealing episode. It not only figures in the first published Life of Shakespeare by Rowe, but also in some manuscript notes in Corpus Christi College written before 1688 by an antiquarian clergyman named Fulman, whose tutor, Dr. Hammond, had been chaplain to the Earl of Southampton.

Before 1590, we find Shakespeare a regular member of Burbage's company of players for which he also rewrites and modernises, or, as we would say, "stages," old plays of which the theatre was, in those days, absolute proprietor.

In 1593, a publisher, Richard Field, a native of Stratford, brings out in London a poem, rather Spenserian in style, from the pen of his fellow-townsmen, William Shakespeare, entitled *Venus and Adonis*. The poem is dedicated to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, a rich and

clever youth of nineteen. The verses meet with great success among the literary lights of the London taverns, of which Southampton is the bright particular star. Several editions are printed, and the year following, the same publisher, Richard Field, brings out another work by the author of *Venus and Adonis*, but on a more tragic subject, *The Rape of Lucrece*.

This poem is also dedicated to the same young nobleman, but we may observe that the dedication is couched in a far more affectionate and familiar style than that of its predecessor. During the many years which intervene between the appearance of these poems and the printing of the sonnets, the fame of their author is assured by the production of such plays as *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *Merchant of Venice*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Henry IV.*, *Henry V.*, *Richard III.*, and *King John*.

His success, as an actor, is great; his popularity, as a "good fellow" and witty talker, no less so.

In 1599, a publisher named Jaggard produced a volume of poems entitled *The Passionate Pilgrim*

which contained three sonnets from the comedy of *Love's Labour's Lost* and also two hitherto unpublished sonnets which later appeared, slightly altered, in the first complete edition, which was printed, ten years later (1609), by the well-known "pirate publisher," Thomas Thorpe.

Both the sonnets printed in *The Passionate Pilgrim* belong to the *Dark Lady* group.

The Thorpe edition contains one hundred and fifty-four sonnets, divided into three separate series by a note in the margin. This division has never been referred to by any commentator, though it is to be seen in the original copy in the British Museum, where the text is cut after No. 126 by the words, printed thus, "SERIES II.," and again at No. 152 a division is marked "SERIES III."

It seems very strange that this fact should never have been observed, for a text facsimile exists in the Library at Washington, nor have English critics been denied access to the British Museum. Sir Sidney Lee in making a facsimile of Thorpe's edition chose the copy in the Bodleian collection, and in this copy the margins have been cut off, so that the division is not apparent.

Thorpe's Series I. ends with No. 126, is addressed to a young male friend above the poet in worldly station, and covers a period of at least three years, and probably several more. The latter portion of this series develops a tragic story of jealousy between author and patron, who are both entangled with the same bewitching woman; these sonnets express bitter grief at the friend's treachery, and contain some magnificent stanzas on remorse, forgiveness, and the renewal of love.

Series II. begins at No. 127 and consists of twenty-six sonnets, addressed to that same dark siren before referred to as causing the breach between author and friend.

Series III. is without much importance and need not occupy us further. It consists of two stanzas on precisely the same subject—the poet's visit to some thermal baths. They contain a classic conceit as to the origin of these hot wells from the quenching of Cupid's arrows in the spring.

In my opinion, besides some one hundred and thirty sonnets which obviously deal with the *same youth* and the *same lady*, there may be some few

SONNETS.

Or layd great bafes for eternity,
 Which proues more fhort then waft or ruining?
 Haue I not feene dwellers on forme and fauor
 Lofe all, and more by paying too much rent
 For compound sweet; Forgoing fimple fauor,
 Pittifull thriours in their gazing fpend.
 Noe, let me be obfequious in thy heart,
 And take thou my oblacion, poore but free,
 Which is not mixt with feconds, knows no art,
 But mutuall render onely me for thee.

Hence, thou fubbornd *Informer*, a trew foule
 When moft impeacht, ftands leaft in thy controule.

126

O Thou my louely Boy who in thy power,
 Doeft hold times fickle glaffe, his fickle, hower:
 Who haft by wayning growne, and therein thou'ft,
 Thy louers withering, as thy fweet felfe grow'ft.
 If Nature (foueraigne mifteres ouer wrack)
 As thou goeft onwards ftill will plucke thee backe,
 She keeps thee to this purpofe, that her skill.
 May time difgrace, and wretched mynuit kill.
 Yet feare her O thou minnion of her pleafure,
 She may detain, but not ftill keepe her trefure!
 Her *Audite* (though delayd) answer'd muft be,
 And her *Quietus* is to render thee.

()

127

IN the ould age blacke was not counted faire,
 Or if it ware it bore not beauties name:
 But now is blacke beauties fucceffiu heire,
 And Beautie flanderd with a bastard fhame,
 For fince each hand hath put on Natures power,
 Fairing the foule with Arts faulfe borrow'd face,
 Sweet beauty hath no name no holy boure,
 But is prophan'd, if not liues in difgrace.

H 3

Therefore

detached stanzas, concerning, as the legal phrase goes, "party or parties unknown."

All comparative analytical criticism places the date of composition of the earliest sonnets contemporaneously with the publication of *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, which they closely resemble in language and metaphor. The very strong resemblance between the imagery of the central portion and *Romeo and Juliet* leads Professor Furness to conclude that they were composed while that tragedy was in progress—that is, before 1597.

We read in *Romeo* for instance:

Thy beauty hangs upon the cheek of night ♣
Like a rich jewel in an Ethiop's ear—

and in sonnet No. 27 he speaks of his friend's face,
rising before his sleepless fancy, ♣

Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.

Only violent upholders of the complete "Pembroke" theory sustain another opinion regarding the date of composition, and for them it is essential to set back the date of production in order to

concord with their views, for William Herbert first appeared in London in 1598.

Moreover, the sonnets which persuade a youth to marry in order to perpetuate his great name, beauty, and talents, mean something if applied to Southampton, the only son of a widowed mother, but become absurd in connection with William Herbert, whose parents were both alive at that date and who had a charming brother of nearly his own age.

But I must proceed with order and, guided by the division indicated by Thorpe, who grouped the sonnets in two principal series, the first of which comprises the poems addressed to a young man, the second those addressed to a fascinating married woman, I shall attempt more completely to identify Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton, with the friend of "Beauty, Birth, and Wit" described as the hero of the first series, and then, in a following chapter describing "Series II.," I shall try to shed some light on the mystery of the *Dark Lady*, developing some new and interesting ideas concerning her possible "local habitation" and her name.

Chapter II

The Fair Youth

CHAPTER II

THE FAIR YOUTH

FOR the comprehension of all that follows, I am obliged to place before my reader the original texts of the three dedications of Shakespeare's early poems which have been handed down to us.

The two dedications signed by the poet himself are both to the Earl of Southampton.

The other is addressed by Thomas Thorpe, the publisher, to some one unknown to us of the present day, under the initials "Mr. W. H."

Let us turn to Thorpe's edition, a thin quarto, published in 1609.

It contains the three series of sonnets before mentioned, which are followed by a short poem called "A Lover's Complaint," by William Shakespeare. The volume bears the following title-page:

Shakespeare Sonnets

SHAKE-SPEARES SONNETS

Neuer before Imprinted.

AT LONDON

By G. ELD for T. T. and are to be sold by Iohn
Wright, dwelling at Christ Church Gate.

1609

This is followed by a page of dedication, which
runs thus:

TO THE ONLIE BEGETTER OF
THESE INSUING SONNETS
MR. W. H. ALLE HAPPINESSE.
AND THAT ETERNITIE
PROMISED
BY
OUR EVER LIVING POET
WISHETH
THE WELL WISHING
ADVENTURER IN
SETTING
FORTH

T. T.

There is nothing extraordinary in the fact that both Pembroke and Southampton should have been interested in Shakespeare's work. The actors' dedication of the 1623 folio, "To the Earl

of Pembroke," is certainly an indication that Pembroke was an admirer of these writings. But it is a long step from this to prove that he inspired the sonnets, especially as, owing to the researches of Sir Sidney Lee, we now possess the proof of how Thorpe actually addressed William Herbert when writing a dedication to him in 1610, for the very year which followed the printing of the sonnets, Healey's translation of St. Augustine's *City of God* was inscribed by the publisher, Thorpe, in the following terms:

TO THE HONOURABLEST PATRON OF THE MUSES
AND GOOD MINDES, LORD WILLIAM EARL OF
PEMBROKE, KNIGHT OF THE MOST NOBLE
ORDER, ETC.

Again in 1616 he showed even more emphatically how dearly he loved to give a lord his full titles, by adding also this dedicatory epistle:

RIGHT HONOURABLE.—It may worthily seeme strange unto your Lordship out of what frenzy one of my meannesse hath presumed to commit this sacrilege in the straightnesse of your Lordship's leasure, to present a peece for matter and model so unworthy, and in this scribbling age, wherein great persons are so

pestered daily with Dedications. All I can alledge in extenuation of so many incongruities, is the bequest of a deceased man. . . . This therefore, being left unto me as a Legacie unto your Lordship (Pardon my presumption, Great Lord, from so meane a man to so great a person), I could not, without impiety, present it to any other. . . .

Your Lordship's humbly devoted

T. TH.

Sir Sidney Lee adds: "With such obeisances, did publishers habitually creep into the presence of the nobility," and how improbable it would seem for Thomas Thorpe curtly to "wish long life and happiness to Mr. W. H." if by these initials he intended to indicate the "great Earl of Pembroke."

This mysterious dedication, from the publisher Thomas Thorpe to "Mr. W. H.," is the only reason for identifying, with the youth of the sonnets, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. It has proved a puzzle, and a stumbling-block, to commentators since Thorpe penned his lines: "To the onlie begetter of these insuing sonnets Mr. W. H."

Some believers in the complete Southampton

theory go so far as to construe these letters of the dedication as a misprint, or rather, inversion, of the initials "W. H.," and give the correct reading as "H. W." (Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton).

Sir Sidney Lee sees in this Mr. W. H. a certain Will Hall, a sort of literary procurer of copy, useful to the purse, and consequently dear to the heart, of the piratical publisher. Mr. Acheson finds in him merely a fictitious personage, invented to cloak the theft of manuscript with a semblance of legality. The "Herbertists," among the most eminent of whom we may cite Professor Dowden and Professor Tyler, believe that the initials of the dedication represent William Herbert, whose father, the Earl of Pembroke, maintained a company of players. This company presented *Henry VI.* by arrangement with Shakespeare and Burbage.

Another fact gives colour to the Herbert theory. After Shakespeare's death, two lifelong members of his troupe, the "fellow-actors" mentioned in his will, undertook to edit the complete dramatic works of William Shakespeare. This edition of

1623, the famous "Hemmings & Condell Folio," was dedicated by them to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke and his brother, Lord Montagu.

Far different are the reasons which lead us to agree with the partisans of the Southampton theory. Let me remind the reader of the following facts: the earliest reference to Shakespeare's sonnets is found in a handbook of Elizabethan literature, by Francis Meres (1598). *Palladis Tamia* or *Wit's Treasury* was published eleven years before Thorpe printed the sonnets and a year before Jaggard's publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim*.

In examining conflicting evidence, we should cultivate our sense of proportion in regard to the relative values of the documents under discussion. Even if it could be definitely proved that William Herbert was indicated by the initials of Thorpe's sonnet dedication, it would only show that he had been their "begetter" in the first Elizabethan sense of the word, meaning "him who procured documents for publication." Pembroke belonged to the literary coterie formerly presided over by Southampton and, to a certain extent, stepped into his place when colonial enterprise and military



Walker & Boutall

Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton

From the painting at Welbeck Abbey



affairs began to occupy Southampton. His own writings brought him into contact with publishers such as Thorpe who may never have known the real inspirer of the sonnets.

In other words, Thorpe's testimony on this subject is about as valuable as that of a thief who had stolen a masterpiece, regarding the personality of the artist's model, as against the direct witness of the artist himself.

Shakespeare has told us, over his signature, in the only volume which he ever himself published, that to Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton, was due and dedicated the author's entire literary work, "done and to do."

Let us examine the foreword to *Venus and Adonis*. It is couched in rather formal style, not greatly differing from the usual dedication of the period, except that it makes a distinct promise of consecrating some "grauer labour" to the patron's name.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE HENRIE WRIOTHESLEY
EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON AND BARON TICHFIELD.

Right Honorable,

I know not how I shall offend in dedicating my

unpolisht lines to your Lordship, nor how the world will censure me for choosing so strong a proppe to support so weak a burden: only if your honour seem but pleased, I account myself highly praised, and vow to take advantage of all idle hours, till I have honoured you with some grauer labour. But if this first child of my invention prove deformed, I shall be sorry it had so noble a godfather, and never after eare so barren a land, for fear it yeeld me still so bad a haruest. I leave it your Honorable survey, and your honour to your heart's content which I wish may always answere your owne wish, and the World's hopeful expectation.

Your Honour's in all dutie

1593

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

The second dedication, written a year later, is in no sense a formal courtesy; on the contrary, it is a declaration of the deepest devotion of which the author is capable. It is a prose epitome of the first sonnet sequence and a paraphrase of the sonnet No. 26.

Lord of my love, to whom in Vassalage
 Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
 To thee I send this written ambassage
 To witness duty, not to show my wit.

Mrs. Charlotta Stopes has cleverly suggested that this single sonnet was sent as a sort of

dedicatory "envoi" with the printed volume of *Venus and Adonis*.

RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY WRIOTHESLEY
EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON AND BARON TICHFIELD.

The love I dedicate to your Lordship is without end: whereof this pamphlet without beginning is but a superfluous moiety. The warrant I have of your Honourable Disposition, not the worth of my untutored lines, makes it assured of acceptance.

What I have done is yours, what I have to do is yours, being part of all I have devoted yours. Were my worth greater, my duty would show greater, meane time, as it is, it is bound to your Lordship. To whom I wish long life, still lengthened with alle happinesse.

Your Lordship's in all duety

1594

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

How can any critic read these dedications without observing their complete spiritual analogy to the early sonnets?

As Irving said, the reason is simple: they do *not* read Shakespeare.

The average commentator is content to read "comments" on this subject, and to refute his rival critic. He wastes no time upon the texts

themselves, especially on *Venus* and *Lucrece* which he would qualify as inferior works, almost as youthful follies.

We find in the sonnets constant allusions to the physical beauty of the author's friend, just as we find the same allusions in *Venus and Adonis*. Southampton was known as the fair and gallant youth, par excellence; he closely resembled Sir Philip Sidney, the favourite type of that age, and even with changing æsthetic standards, his portrait by Miervelt, at nineteen, remains to our modern eyes that of a handsome, refined, and interesting young man.

SONNET 53

.
Describe ADONIS, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you:
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new.

.
In all external grace you have some part
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

The mother's beauty and widowhood are referred to in No. 3 and No. 9:

Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime—

whereas William Herbert's father was living until 1601, and Herbert, to judge from his face, as the darkies say, "never would have been counted no beauty nohow."

There is one sonnet, No. 122 in Thorpe's first series, which seems to me an explanation or apology to Southampton for giving away his own precious copy of these poems.

122

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain,
Full character'd with lasting memory,
Which shall above that idle rank remain
Beyond all date, even to eternity;
Or, at the least, as long as mind and heart,
Have faculty by nature to subsist;
Till each to razed oblivion yield his part
Of thee thy record, never can be missed.
That poor retention could not so much hold
Nor need I tallies, my dear love to score;
Therefore to give them from me was I bold
To trust those tables that receive thee more:
 To keep an adjunct to remember thee
 Were to import forgetfulness in me.

May not this sonnet mark the moment when Shakespeare handed on his volume to "Mr. W. H." through whom it reached Thorpe?

Another sonnet, No. 77, invites the recipient to commit his own thoughts to paper.

Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear,
 Thy dial, how the precious minutes waste;
 The vacant leaves thy mind's imprint will bear,
 And of this book this learning mayest thou taste. . . .
 Look, what thy memory cannot contain,
 Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find
 These children nurs'd, deliver'd from thy brain
 Do take a new acquaintance of thy mind.
 These offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
 Shall profit thee, and *much enrich thy book*.

I have little doubt that this invitation was accepted and that a few verses were jotted down in the "waste blanks"; it would account for the presence in the collection of one sonnet, at least, which critics agree cannot be from the hand of Shakespeare.

145

Those lips that love's own hand did make
 Breathed forth the sound that said, "I hate,"
 To me that languished for her sake;
 But when she saw my woful state,
 Straight in her heart did mercy come,
 Chiding that tongue, that ever sweet,
 Was used to giving gentle doom,
 And taught it thus anew to greet. . . .

"I hate" from hate, away she threw,
And saved my life saying, "not you."

It has been suggested that Southampton himself was the author of this sonnet and also of the last two marked "Series III." in Thorpe's edition.

Numbers 104 and 102 indicate the duration of time covered between the earlier and later sonnets:

104

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed
Such seems your beauty still— Three winters cold
Have, from the forests, shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to mellow autumn turned,
In process of the seasons, have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burned
Since first I saw you fresh, which still are green.

102

Our love was new, and then but in the spring
When I was wont to greet it with my lays.
As Philomel' in summer's front doth sing
And stops her pipe in growth of happier days.
Not that the summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,
But that wild music burdens every bough,
And sweets grown common, lose their dear delight,
Therefore like her, I sometimes hold my tongue,
Because I would not dull you with my song.

Another confirmation, if needed, of the Southampton theory, is found in the description of the "Rival Poets," which occupies about twenty of the sonnets, and is so interesting that I shall make it the subject of a special chapter. Suffice it to say here, that all these rivals can be identified with men who eagerly sought Southampton's favour, such as Nash, Florio, Marlowe, and Chapman.

The type of Southampton appears in all his romantic, and delightfully human heroes: Prince Hal, Romeo, Bassanio, Benedick, and Florizel; immortal portraits of the careless, brave, and brilliant soldier-poet, sportsman, and lover, such as Shakespeare and Walter Scott alone have given us. The facts of Southampton's life concord perfectly with this hypothesis. We find the quarrels of poet and patron described in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, but their friendship is reflected in all of Shakespeare's work.

A "child of state" or ward of the Crown, Southampton, at the age of twelve, entered St. John's College, Cambridge; the following year he sent his guardian an essay in excellent Latin, on the text, that all men are moved to virtue by the hope



The Earl of Southampton in the Tower of London
From the painting at Welbeck Abbey

of reward. "Every man," he says, "no matter how well- or how ill-endowed with the graces of humanity, whether in the enjoyment of great honour, or condemned to obscurity, experiences that yearning for glory, which alone begets virtuous endeavour." This paper, which is preserved at Hatfield, is a model of caligraphy, and shows a refinement very unusual in a boy of thirteen. Southampton graduated at sixteen from the University; he was a member of Gray's Inn, as some knowledge of law was deemed necessary for one of such large estate.

In 1592, he was recognised as the most handsome and accomplished of the young men who frequented the royal presence; and in that year he accompanied the Queen on her State visit to Oxford. A Latin poem, of the University Press, describes this "Prince of Hampshire" "No other youth was more beautiful (*quo non formosior alter non fuit*) nor more distinguished in the arts of learning, though the tender down scarce bloomed on his cheek." In November, 1595, he appeared in the lists set up in the Queen's presence, to honour the thirty-seventh anniversary of her reign.

On this occasion he was likened by a poet to "Sir Bevis, so valiant in arms, so gentle and debonair did he appear."

At nineteen he was engaged to Elizabeth Vere, Cecil's granddaughter. In vain did his family and friends attempt to persuade him to make this most brilliant match. Southampton plunged into the dissipations of London life and would not hear of such a marriage. In 1596, he fell desperately in love with Elizabeth Vernon, cousin to the Earl of Essex and a Maid of Honour. He was dismissed from Court for his attentions to this fair lady, and, in the language of the angry Queen's command, "given leave to travel." He returned, however, secretly, from France, was married clandestinely to Mistress Vernon, discovered, and thrown into prison, from which he emerged only to participate in the revolt against the Government headed by Essex. For this rash act, Essex was beheaded; but before going to the scaffold he made such an eloquent plea for the youth of Southampton, who had been led away owing to his own persuasions and superior force of character, that the House of Lords was greatly

affected and consented to commute young Southampton's death sentence to life imprisonment in the Tower of London.

There he remained until the death of Elizabeth. The accession of James brought about his liberation in 1603. After the coronation of the new monarch he was, for a time, prominent in Court festivities; but his high temper led him into many disputes with his fellow-courtiers, Philip Herbert and the Duke of Buckingham being among the number. He was more congenially occupied than at Court as treasurer of the Virginia Company; he helped to equip colonial expeditions. Hampton River and Hampton Roads were named to commemorate his efforts as a colonial pioneer. Probably his interest in these subjects caused his friend to compose *The Tempest*, the only one of his comedies, except *Love's Labour's Lost*, which has a completely original subject.

Southampton was no mere "carpet-knight." He was a soldier and sailor whom we find in 1597 commanding a small squadron of the Queen's ships, dispersing thirty-five vessels of the Armada, and sinking a Spanish galleon. Having gone

ashore with Essex and a small band of sailors on the island of St. Michael, they were attacked by a hostile force, which, says the chronicler, "was received with so much spirit by the small band whom they expected to have found an easy prey, that many were put to the sword and the mob obliged to retreat. Southampton behaved with such gallantry that he was knighted by Essex 'ere he could wipe the sweat from his brows or put sword in scabbard."

Here then is the explanation of the principal sonnet subjects: advice to the youth, to make the brilliant marriage his mother had arranged; reproach for the dissipated life he was leading in 1595 and 1596. The exquisite lines, beginning "Let us not to the marriage of true minds," celebrate his union with Miss Vernon. The interesting historical sonnet, No. 107, is generally supposed to refer to the release of the poet's friend from the Tower:

107

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,

Supposed as forfeit, to a confined doom.
The Mortal Moon hath her eclipse endured,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage,
Incertainties now crown themselves assured
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My love looks fresh, and death to me subscribes.
Since spite of him I 'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes.
And thou herein shalt find thy monument
When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

Gerald Massey says in regard to this sonnet:

King James came to the throne as the personification of peace, peace in himself and in his policy, peace, "white robed or white livered," peace at home and abroad; peace anyhow, so that he might not be scared with his antenatal terror, a sword. I will make a very curious parallel to that of the 107th sonnet, from a bit of contemporary prose. This is the first paragraph of the dedicatory epistle to King James, still to be seen at the beginning of our English Bibles:

"For whereas it was the expectation of many, who wished not well to our Sion, that the setting of that bright occidental star, Queen Elizabeth, of most happy memory, some thick and palpable clouds of darkness would have overshadowed this land that men should have been in doubt which way they were to walk and that it should hardly be known who was to direct the unsettled state; the appearance of Your

Majesty as of the Sun in its strength, instantly dispelled those supposed and surmised mists, and gave unto all exceeding comfort; especially when we beheld the Government established in your Highness and your hopeful seed by an undoubted Title, and this also accompanied with peace and tranquillity at home and abroad.”

It is impossible to doubt that the same spirit pervades the two, the same death is recorded; the same fears are alluded to, the same exultation is expressed: the same peace identified. The sonnet tells us in all plainness, that the poet had been filled with “prophesying fear” for the fate of his friend whose life was supposed to be forfeited to a “confined doom” or, as we say—“his days were numbered”: that the instinct of the world had forboded the same, but that the Queen is now dead and all uncertainties are over: those who augured the worst can afford to laugh at their own predictions. The new King smiles on the poet’s friend, and with this new reign and release, there opens a new dawn of gladness and promise for the Nation.

Stowe’s Annals give us the exact date of Southampton’s release from the Tower, April 10, 1603, in one of the balmiest springs England had ever seen, and, though Mr. Acheson and Prof. Tyler ascribe this sonnet to an earlier date, I cannot believe with

the latter, that the peace of Vervins could elicit such a sonnet nor that Southampton's risk as a soldier in 1597 was sufficient to be referred to as a "confined doom." I can believe still less, with Mr. Acheson, that the "domestic and international happenings" which he assigns to the autumn of 1594 could produce this triumphant Spring Song!

The year of Thorpe's publication of the sonnets, 1609, must have put an end to the close personal relations between author and friend, for in that year Southampton was made Governor of the Isle of Wight, where, says Sir John Oglander, "his just, affable and obliging deportment, gained him the love of all ranks of people."

He died in command of six thousand men in the Low Countries, of a fever contracted while tending his young son, who expired a few days before his father, November, 1624.

Lady Southampton survived many years, signalling herself by her loyalty to King Charles whom she concealed in her "Noble Seat of Tichfield" after his escape from Hampton Court in 1647. Though there is little documentary evidence concerning Lady Southampton, Mr. Massey be-

lieves that just as the "Dark Lady" served as a model of the Cleopatras and Cresseids of the plays, so she whose curls resembled the poet's description of "buds of marjoram" suggested, in her loving and gentle femininity, the Desdemonas and Ophelias.

The letter which follows lends colour to this theory. It was written while Southampton was in Ireland with Essex, having left his wife in the care of Lord and Lady Rich.

July 8th 1599. My dear Lord and onlie joy of my Life, I besceech you love me ever and be pleased to know that My Lady Rich would needs have me send you word how importunate My Lord Rich is with her to come to London. . . . She is, she tells me, very loth to leave me here alone and very desirous, I thank her, to have me with her in Essex [House] till your return unto me.

For myself, I protest unto you, that your will, either in this, or in any thing else, shall be most pleasing to me and my mind is alike to all places in this ill time of your absence being quiet in no place. I was most unwilling to give you cause of trouble thinking of me in this matter and this last, protesting unto you again that where you like best I should be, that place shall be most pleasing and all others most hateful



Elizabeth, Countess of Southampton

From the painting by Van Dyke
(Copyright, 1899, by Albert Rosenthal)

unto me. I am never ending praying to God to keep you ever out of all danger, perfectly well and soon bring you to me.

Who will endlessly be your faithful and obedient wife

E. SOUTHAMPTON.

I shall, farther on, have occasion to quote the postscript of this same letter, which sheds a curious light on Shakespeare himself. For the moment, I wish only to add that the granddaughter of Lord and Lady Southampton was that Lady Charles Russell who embodied in herself the charm and sweetness of Rosalind with the noble character and intellect of the two Portias and has been called the flower of English womanhood.

Mrs. Jameson in *Shakespeare's Heroines* has already noticed this complex case of "literary heredity," that is, the descendant being obviously influenced by an imaginative work which itself had been inspired by her own ancestress.

I have often wondered whether Lady Southampton might not have been partially responsible for King Charles' love of Shakespeare, whose works consoled the imprisonment of this unfortunate monarch and one of whose prayers was

quoted in the King's book of devotions, *Eikon Basiliké*.

To sum up the case for Southampton then, let us consider what evidence is admitted in a court of law. First in importance, is taken the signed testimony of the person chiefly concerned; next, evidence deduced from text; then, corroborative proofs. All these, I have shown, indicate Southampton both as Shakespeare's Patron and Youth of the sonnets. Is anything more required? Yes: the impartial witness of a contemporary. This we have also.

The first printed biography of Shakespeare was by Nicholas Rowe, and figured as a preface in his edition of the poet's works printed in 1709. In it we read:

He [Shakespeare] had the Honour to meet with many marks of uncommon favour and Friendship from the Earl of Southampton, famous in the Histories of that time for his friendship to the unfortunate Earl of Essex. . . . It was to that Noble Lord that he dedicated his *Venus and Adonis*. . . . My Lord Southampton, at one time, gave him a thousand pounds, to enable him to carry out a purchase, which he heard he had a mind to. . . .

In comparison with such proofs as these, the publisher's unauthorised dedication to "Mr. W. H." seems irrelevant and unimportant.

Having thus spoken of the first series of sonnets, those addressed to the "Fair Youth," let us now study the second series, or those stanzas which are addressed to the mysterious "Dark Lady."

Chapter III

The Dark Lady

CHAPTER III

THE DARK LADY

THORPE'S second series opens with No. 127.

There are probably many sonnets missing, a circumstance which need not surprise us. For obvious reasons we wonder why more are not absent from the collection, and are obliged to conclude that the Dark Lady who was their subject must have been singularly lacking in sensitiveness, if she passed on some of those which survive and are handed down to us.

The first sonnets are quite frivolous in character, merely the complimentary verses which form the frequent poetical tribute to a pretty woman. The love affair thus begun seems to be a simple flirtation. There are constant jesting allusions to their heroine's unpopular dark complexion. The so called "Will" sonnets are filled with jibes on the lady's obstinacy, tenacity of purpose, and

capricious tyranny; frequent puns are made on this "will" of the lady's, and Will, the poet's name.

Make but my name thy love, and love that still
And then thou lovest me for my name is Will—

and again:

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy will
And Will to boot, and Will in overplus,
More than enough am I, that vex thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.

One sonnet is most amusing, as being so palpably a parody of William Griffin's verses in praise of his "blonde," which runs as follows:

My lady's hair is threads of beaten gold,
Her front the purest crystal eye hath seen,
Her eye the brightest star that heaven holds,
Her cheeks red roses such as seld have been,
Her pretty lips of red vermilion dye,
Her hands of ivory, the purest white,
Her blush Aurora, or the morning sky. . . .
Her body is the saint that I adore,
Her smiles and favours sweet as honey bee,
Her fair feet, Thetis praiseth evermore,
But oh! the last and worst is still behind,
For of a Griffin, she doth bear the mind.

Compare Shakespeare's sonnet No. 130:

My Mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun,
 Coral is far more red than her lip's red,
 If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun,
If hair be wires, black wires grow on her head. . . .
 I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
 That music hath a far more pleasing sound,
 I grant I never saw a Goddess go,
My Mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare,
 As any she, belied with false compare.

In No. 48 ⁽¹³⁸⁾ we gain some light upon the poet's
age—and the lady's veracity:

When my love swears that she is made of truth
 I do believe her, though I know she lies,
 That she may think me some untutored youth
 Unlearnèd in the world's false subtleties.
 Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
 Although she knows my days are past the best,
 Simply I credit her false speaking tongue,
 On both sides thus, is simple truth suppressed,
 But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
 And wherefore say not I, that I am old?
 Oh, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
 And age in love, loves not to have years told. . . .

These sonnets have no extraordinary poetical
 merit; but, with the development of his passion,
 the seriousness of tone deepens, becomes bitter,
 then tragic. From literary trifling, we eventually
 receive the impression that the poems are written

in heart's blood. There is a remarkable mingling of strong emotion with a clear-sighted dissection of his state of mind, as in No. 141:

In faith I do not love thee with mine eyes,
 For they in thee, a thousand errors note,
 But 't is my heart that loves what they despise,
 And ~~in despite of view, is pleased to dote . . .~~
 Only my plague, thus far, I count my gain,
 That she who makes me sin, awards me pain—

also in No. 140:

Be wise as thou art cruel; do not press
 My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain,
 Lest sorrow lend me words, and words express
 The manner of my pity-wanting pain.
 If I might teach thee wit, better it were,
 Tho' not to love—yet love to tell me so—
 As testy sick men, when their deaths are near,
 No news but health, from their physician know—
 For if I should despair, I should grow mad,
 And in my madness might speak ill of thee—
 Now this ill-wresting world is grown so bad
 Mad slanderers by mad ears believèd be.
 That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
 Bear thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart
 go wide.

We understand through these lines that the poet realises and chafes at his own slavery, that his clear brain comprehends his moral decadence, while his

“foolish heart” and ardent nature lead him on against his better judgment. There is something particularly gruesome and painful in this dissection of the writer’s own soul-malady; but, as he watches the effect of a like passion and like enslavement on the beloved friend of whom he had once sung:

But thou present’st a pure unstainèd prime . . .
 Thou hast passed through the ambush of young days
 Either not assailed, or victor being charged—

we perceive that the mistress’s treachery is a grief less deep than the disloyalty of the beloved “better angel”—

So now I have confessed that he is thine,
 And I myself am mortgaged to thy will,
 Myself I ’ll forfeit, so that other mine
Thou wilt restore, to be my comfort still—

and again:

Ay me, Love knows it is a greater grief
 To bear love’s wrong, than hate’s known injury.

In my opinion this series should finish with Nos. 152, 129, and 146. No. 152 shows that both Shakespeare and the lady were married;

In loving thee, thou knowest I am forsworn,
But thou art twice forsworn to me love swearing.

No. 129 begins with the powerful lines on profane love:

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame—
and forms the contrast to No. 146 which is the beautiful address to the poet's own soul, the moral climax of the drama of the Dark Lady.

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth
Pressed by those rebel powers that thee array,
Why should'st thou pine within, and suffer dearth
Painting thine outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then soul live on! upon thy servant's loss
And let him pine, to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine, in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more!
So shalt thou feed on death, that feeds on men
And death once dead, there's no more dying then.

The question of the Dark Lady's identity has been always of extreme interest, but has not come very near solution. Each commentator presents his claimant; no one has any serious evidence to substantiate his claim.

For those who wish to think that Mary Fitton, one of the Queen's maids of honour, dismissed from Court for an unplatonic intrigue with Pembroke, was the original "Dark Lady," I recommend the work of Professor Tyler. For those who prefer to find the siren's prototype in Sidney's much be-rhymed "Stella" (the famous Penelope Devereux, Lady Rich), I would counsel Mr. Massey's delightful *Secret Drama of the Sonnets* which is one of the most entertaining books upon this subject. But as, after much study, I can find absolutely no real evidence to back either of these clever theories, except the exceeding ingenuity of their respective author's argument, I conclude that, to approach the truth, we should search for the mysterious lady according to the principles of modern detective science as laid down by Dr. Conan Doyle, who makes "Sherlock Holmes's" maxim, "Never follow an obscure clue, when there is a plain one."

Is there any contemporary evidence connecting Shakespeare's name with any woman whatsoever? There is. Can this person also be associated with Southampton? She can. Would her social status

allow both to meet her on terms of familiarity? Yes, it might.

Let us, then, without going so far afield as to seek among "Cynthia's maids" this elusive heroine, examine some old contemporary scandals.

Turning first to the earliest published work on Shakespeare: Rowe's *Life*, Anthony à Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, and Aubrey's *Lives*, we find that Shakespeare frequented, on his annual visits to Stratford from London, an inn, "afterwards known as the 'Crown'" in Oxford, presided over by a wealthy wine merchant, John Davenant, and his pretty wife. This couple's son was the famous poet-laureate and playwright of Charles II.'s time, Sir William d'Avenant, who was Shakespeare's godson.

This poet's mother [says Anthony à Wood, *Athenæ Oxoniensis*] was a very beautiful woman, of good wit and conversation very agreeable; in which she was imitated by none of her children but this William. The father, who was a very grave and discreet citizen (yet an admirer and lover of plays and playmakers, especially Shakespeare, who frequented his house in his journies between Warwickshire and London) was of a melancholic disposition and was

seldom, or never, seen to laugh; in which he was imitated by none of his children but by Robert, his eldest son.

One of the first poetic essays of William Davenant was the following ode on Shakespeare's death, written when he was a boy of eleven :

ODE ON THE REMEMBRANCE OF MASTER WILLIAM
SHAKESPEARE

Beware, delighted poets, when you sing
To welcome nature in the early spring,
Your numerous feet not to tread
The banks of Avon; for each flower
As it ne'er knew, or sun or shower,
Hangs there a pensive head. . . .
The piteous river wept itself away
Long since alas! to such a swift decay
That reach the map and look
If ever there a river you can spy,
And for a river, your mocked eye
Will find a shallow brook.

Later, when Sir William d'Avenant tried to prove his descent from a noble Norman family and adopted an apostrophe, a contemporary wit remarked: "Quite useless; every one knows that d'Avon-ant comes from Avon."

Oldys, in his *Choice Notes*, tells us:

Young Will Davenant was then a little school boy in the town, seven or eight years old, and so fond of Shakespeare, that whenever he heard of his arrival, he would fly from school to see him. One day, an old townsman, observing him running homeward, asked him whither he was posting in all that heat and hurry. He answered: To see his godfather, Shakespeare. "There's a good boy," said [the other; "but have a care how you take the name of God in vain."

Aubrey, in his *Brief Lives, Chiefly of Contemporaries*, says:

Now Sir William [d'Avenant] would sometimes, when pleasant over a glass of wine with his most intimate friends, *e. g.*, Sam Butler, author of *Hudibras*, etc., say, that it seemed to him that he writ with the very spirit of Shakespeare, and seemed willing enough to be thought his son. He would tell the story as above, in which way his mother had a very light report.

The author of D'Avenant's memoirs says:

It is probable that [Shakespeare] stood sponsor for this William. He appears to have been very much attached to children, and particularly so to the eldest son of Mine Host of the "Crown," Robert, afterwards Fellow of St. John's College, and a reverend Doctor of Divinity.

This, Aubrey thus confirms:

I have heard Parson Robert say that Mr. Shakespeare has given him a hundred kisses.

Let us compare Anthony à Wood's description of the mistress of the Crown, with Shakespeare's own hasty sketch of the hostess of the Porpenentine (*Comedy of Errors*):

A wench of excellent discourse, pretty and witty, wild, and yet—too gentle.

Now, of course the scandal implied in all this may be the most unwarranted slander. I only wish to bring out the fact that here *is* a woman whom popular gossip linked with Shakespeare, and a most interesting piece of confirmatory evidence is to be found in the postscript of that letter from Lady Southampton to her husband (printed by the Historical Manuscripts Commission). The text of the letter has been quoted in a former chapter. It was written in 1599, while the Earl was in Ireland with Essex. Here is the postscript:

All the news I can send you, which I think will make you merry, is that Sir JOHN FALSTAFF, is by

his mistress Dame PINT-POT, made father of a goodly Miller's thumb, a boy that is all head and very little body.

Sir Sidney Lee sees in this allusion only an "interesting proof that the Southamptons were acquainted with *Henry IV.*," and says:

This cryptic sentence proves, on the part of the Earl and Countess, familiarity with Falstaff's adventures. The Fat Knight apostrophises Mrs. Quickly as "Good Pint-Pot," and that Sir John, the father of the boy who was "all head and very little body," was a playful allusion to Sir John's creator, is by no means beyond the bounds of possibility. In the letters of Sir Toby Matthew the sobriquet of "Sir John Falstaff" seems to have been bestowed upon Shakespeare.

It occurs to me that this statement casts a very interesting light on the rôle taken by Shakespeare in his own play. Mr. Sothern was called by his friends "Dundreary"; Mme. Calvé is known to hers as "Carmen"; it seems more likely, that when an author-actor is called Falstaff, that name alludes to the "creator of the part" rather than the writer.

Shakespeare's name stands first on the list of



William Shakespeare
The Chandos Portrait

actors in the original performance of Ben Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* (1598) which would correspond to the part of "Knowell, an old gentleman," first in the dramatis personæ, of that play. In the original cast of *Sejanus* the actors' names are set down in two columns; Burbage heads the first, Shakespeare the second column. In the folio edition of the plays, Shakespeare's name heads the list of "Principall Actors in all these plays."

We know that Burbage took the heroic parts and Kemp the clown's invariable rôle, that Shakespeare's only identified parts are those of Adam in *As You Like It* (his brother Gilbert's testimony) and the King's Ghost in *Hamlet*, which Rowe describes as the "height of his performance." He must therefore have been slated for the "old parts" for which his premature baldness fitted him. We know that he abhorred wigs,

Those spoils of sepulchres that dare inhabit on a
living head.

His appearance was probably mature, for while still quite young he speaks of himself in a sonnet

as being "beated and chapped, with tanned antiquity." So with a little powder on his beard and the historic "false paunch" we may find the key to Lady Southampton's allusion, and to Sir Toby Matthew's nickname of Falstaff.

Until a short time ago, no one, to my knowledge had attempted to link the personality of the woman of the Crown tavern with her of the sonnets.

But lately, Mr. Acheson has published a book where the same theory is developed on different evidence. He has not used some of the above material, and my courage was inferior to his, in wading through the minor Elizabethan poets to find "Willobie his Avisas." Nor would I counsel any one to plod through this "weary work." Suffice it to say, that this lengthy poem was published in the same year as *Lucrece* (1594) and contains the first known reference to Shakespeare as a poet. Two years later it was ordered out of print by the London Censor, as being eminently libellous to some great person, probably Southampton.

Mr. Acheson thinks that he has conclusively

proved that this poem was written by Mathew Royden, the fast friend of Chapman and enemy of Shakespeare.

We certainly find in this contemporary document a parody of the drama of the sonnets in libellous and vulgar form.

I will quote only such portions as most plainly bring out this parody—there are more than a hundred pages of it!—and particularly note that the “Epistle Dedicatory” purports to be from Oxford, thus fixing the scene in the Davenants’ town. The persons who figure are: A beautiful innkeeper’s wife, a dissolute nobleman, an old player, and a troop of other suitors. The innkeeper’s wife is constantly tempted by these admirers; she is called the chaste AVISA, but the author admits that this is not her real name; he chooses it, says he, to describe her chastity: “A rare bird indeed! indeed a Rara Avis,” hence Avisa or the English “Lucrece.”

Mr. Acheson supposes Mrs. Davenant’s maiden name to have been “Byrd,” as a man of that name is mentioned as trustee of her husband’s will and was probably a relation. It may be hoped that

this question will be investigated by Oxford genealogists.

We note that the youth in the text is known as "H. W." and that he is addressed by his "familiar friend" the "old player" as "Harry." Also that the verses placed in the mouth of "Harry" always end with Italian phrases, "Ama chi ti ama," "Il fine fa il tutto," etc., and that Italian was Southampton's "hobby." The author, in a note, exclaims against the wickedness of the world, which sees, in these initials, an allusion to very well known people. "It must be their evil consciences," he says, "that causes such an error." Here is the opening:

In Lavine land though Livy boast
There hath been found a constant dame,
Though Rome lament that she hath lost
The garland of her fairest fame,
Yet now ye see, that there is found
As great a faith, on English ground.

Though Collatine have dearly bought
To high renown a lasting life,
And found what most in vain have sought,
To have a chaste and constant wife.
Yet Tarquin pluck't his glistening grape,
And SHAKE-SPEARE, paints poor Lucrece' rape!

Let Lucre-Avis, be thy name
This English eagle soars alone,
And far surmounts all other fame,
Where high, or low, or great, or small,
This Brytan BYRD out flies them all.

After pages of this sort of rhyme, chiefly dialogued between Avis and her lovers, the verse is broken by the following prose:

HENRICO WILLEBEGO—ITALO-HISPALENSIS

H. W., being sodenly affected with the contagion of a fantastick fit, at the first sight of Avis pineth away in secret grief. At length, not able any longer to endure the burning heat of so fervent a humour, bewrayeth the secrecy of his disease to his familiar friend W. S. who, not long before, had tried the courtesy of a like passion, and was newly recovered from a like infection. . . . This miserable comforter, either that he would secretly laugh at his friends folly, that had given occasion, not long before, for others to laugh at his own, or because he would see whether another could play his own part better than himself, and viewing afar off the course of this loving Comedy, he determined to see whether it would sort to a better end with this new actor, than it did for the *Old Player*. But at length, this Comedy was like to have grown a Tragedy by the weak and feeble estate that H. W. was brought unto.

H. W.

I have the fever heccticke right,
 I burn within, consume without.
 And having melted all my might
 Then cometh death, without all doubt.
 But yonder comes my faithful friend,
 That like assaults hath often tried,
 On his advice I will depend,
 Where I shall winne or be denied.

W. S.

Well met, friend Harry, what 's the cause
 You look so pale with lented cheeks?
 Your wanny face, and sharpened nose
 Shew well your mind something mislikes.
 What is she man, that works thy woe?
 I swear it shall not farder go.

H. W.

See yonder house, where hangs the badge
 Of England's Saint, when Captains cry
 Victorious land to conquering rage,
 Lo! there my hopeless help doth lie—
 And there, my friendly foe doth dwell
 That makes my heart to rage and swell.

This continues interminably; but the fact that these inept lines were censored out of press, shows sufficiently that they carried more of a sting than would at first appear. (Mr. Acheson has proved in

a pamphlet entitled *A Woman Colour'd Ill*, published after these pages went to press, that the Davenant's Inn *did* bear the ensign of the Cross of St. George.)

One word upon the reasons for espousing the Southampton, and not the "Herbert" theory.

Two signed documents show that Shakespeare himself considered his whole literary work due and dedicated to Southampton; we also have internal proof and contemporary evidence to the same effect. It does not seem reasonable to take as equally good testimony, the flattering dedication of a "pirate publisher," penned eleven years after the sonnets were generally known, and probably fifteen after they were written. There is absolutely no proof that Shakespeare and Pembroke ever met; if there were, there is none connecting him with the Mr. "W. H." of Thorpe's dedication. This is merely an idea which has taken hold of public imagination and pleased popular fancy.

If the futility of connecting Pembroke intimately with Shakespeare's early work is demonstrated, does it not also appear that there is no use in

looking up Pembroke's mistresses to gain light on the personality of the dark lady?

On the contrary, we have very good proof that Shakespeare knew and loved Southampton, and whether or not we can identify Mistress Davenant with the "woman in the case," I think that in this new and unexplored direction there may be much to learn.

Sir Sidney Lee tells us that the influence of the Dark Lady, on Shakespeare's life and work could have been but a passing one. It seems to me that herein Sir Sidney Lee does not show his usual perspicacity and literary intuition. We find the influence of this passion through all of Shakespeare's work.

Even if the worst interpretation be put upon his relations with Mrs. Davenant, or another, it is not a very serious imputation on his general morality. That the poet passed through a period of great moral suffering, no one who takes the internal evidence of the sonnets can doubt; but that he came triumphantly through the flames, tempered and ripened,

none who studies his maturer work can doubt either.

His views on life were eminently sane and normal; he believed in the ennobling potency of love. Unlike the cynical view which regards love as a madness, he treats it as an inspiration. His noble characters gain dignity through loving (Portia, Juliet, Desdemona). His frivolous ones, like Biron and Benedick, are made manly through the influence of this passion.

A new idea is often qualified as "absurd on the face of it" until time has gradually brought the public to a discussion of its real merits. Any impartial reader who takes the trouble to go to the sources of Shakespearian tradition cannot fail to be struck in seeing how inevitably the old clues lead us back through Beeston and Betterton, Davies, Fulman, and Lacey, to that "Inn afterwards known as the 'Crown'" as the stage of the great love-drama of William Shakespeare.

Who owned the best authentic likenesses of the poet, the Chandos and the Garrick Club bust? William d'Avenant. Dryden tells us that the Chandos portrait was painted by Burbage, who

was a painter as well as the company's Hamlet. This portrait was in the possession of the famous actor, Betterton, who had procured it from d'Avenant, and a copy was made for Dryden by the court painter Sir Godfrey Kneller. As for the beautiful bust now belonging to the Garrick Club, it was found bricked up in a niche on the site of d'Avenant's theatre where it was supposed to have decorated the proscenium, as the theatre was especially consecrated to Shakespearian drama.

This bust is the best looking and most intellectual of the poet's likenesses, bearing to the Droeshout print and Stratford bust the same degree of idealisation as is seen in Houdon's celebrated bust of Molière, Molière who was more fortunate than the "bard of Avon" in one respect, at least,—no Delia Bacon has yet attempted to prove that Descartes wrote the *Misanthrope*.

Many readers like to believe that the fine sonnet No. 109 was written to the poet's own wife:

109

Oh never say that I was false of heart
Though absence seemed my flame to qualify,

As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie.
That is my home of love, if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again,
Just to the time not with the time exchanged
So that myself bring water for my stain.

This is a pleasant thought, and I own that I should like to believe that Mrs. Shakespeare, if she were ever the bitter and shrewish woman of the *Comedy of Errors* (which we sometimes suspect), grew to a better knowledge and a broader view of her husband's delinquencies.

Sorrow may have taught her charity, for we learn that the only son of the marriage, Hamnet, the delicate and foredoomed child whom we recognise in the touching sketch of the young Mamillius (*Winter's Tale*), died in early boyhood.

Though these speculations may be fanciful, of the actual facts there is no doubt.

At the height of his fame and fortune, William Shakespeare returned to Stratford, lifted the mortgages from his father's property, and spent the remainder of his life with the mother of his children and with the two daughters, both married before his death, Susanna, to Dr. Hall, a man of

high attainments and reputation; Judith, to one Richard Quinney, a Stratford wine merchant.

If, from these peaceful surroundings, the poet looked back on the episode of the Dark Lady, let us hope that it was as to an incident which ripened his literary genius, so that, like Enobarbus, he could reply to the cry of Antony's despair: "Would I had never met her!"

Oh sir! you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of work.

His life's philosophy has always seemed to me to be summed up in the wonderful line of Edgar in *King Lear*:

Men must endure their going hence, even as their
coming hither,
RIPENESS IS ALL.

Chapter IV

Shakespeare and the Rival Poets

CHAPTER IV

SHAKESPEARE AND THE RIVAL POETS

THE rival poets, so frequently referred to in the sonnets, and according to Mr. Acheson and Professor Minto so obviously satirised in the play of *Love's Labour's Lost*, may be identified with Marlowe, Chapman, Greene, Nash, and Florio. All were well-known aspirants for Southampton's favour. John Florio was his mentor and master of Italian, the young Earl being proficient in that language and devoted to its literature. It would be difficult to overestimate the influence which Florio must have had in the shaping of Shakespeare's work, since it must have been through him that the dramatist reached the untranslated *Novelle* on which many of the plays were founded.

This Florio was an Italian, resident in London. He married Rose, the sister of the poet Samuel Daniel and, besides his famous translations of Montaigne's *Essays*, he published a dictionary,

The World of Words, dedicated to his patron Southampton, and also a conversation book of English and Italian phrases (most amusing reading, by the way), from which I cannot refrain quoting the following conversation between "Henry and John":

"Let us make a match at tennis."—"Agreed, this fine morning calls for it."—"And after, we will go to dinner, and after dinner we will see a play."—"The plaies they play in England are neither right comedies nor right tragedies."—"But they do nothing but play every day."—"Yea: but they are neither right comedies nor right tragedies."—"How would you name them then?"—"Representations of history, without any decorum."

"Senz alcun decoro" really means without any scenery, and the thought of the author is evidently represented by the *Italian* side of the dialogue; however, the English translation was so set down and has even been considered by critics as an attack on Shakespeare! The conversation finishes with:

"What ho, boy! bring hither some balls and some rackets."



John Florio
 From an old copper print

Shakespeare and the Rival Poets 77

We cannot fail to mark, in this connection, Shakespeare's frequent allusions to the game of tennis at which Southampton was an adept. The "hawking" language is common to him and to Florio. He quotes often from Southampton's Italian master.

A favourite argument with Baconians is the difficulty which a man like Shakespeare would have experienced in reaching the sources of Italian plots from Boccaccio and Bandello; but with Florio and Southampton at his elbow, this difficulty never existed.

Let us see what Shakespeare has to say of his other rivals in the three following sonnets Nos. 78, 80 and 86:

78

So oft have I invoked thee for my muse
And found such fair assistance in my verse,
As every alien pen hath got my use
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learnèd's wing
And given grace, a double majesty. . . .

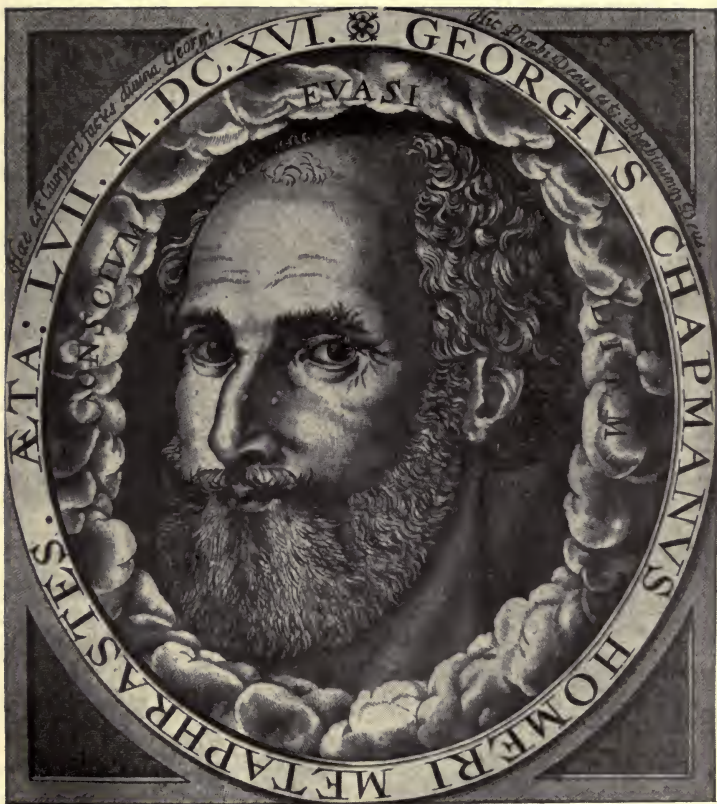
80

Oh how I faint when I of you do write
 Knowing a better spirit doth use your name
 And in the praise thereof spends all his might
 To make me tongue-tied, speaking of your fame
 But since your worth, wide as the ocean is
 The humble, as the proudest sail doth bear
 My saucy bark, inferior far to his
 On your broad main doth wilfully appear. . . .

86

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
 Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
 That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
 Making their tomb the womb in which they grew?
 Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
 Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
 No, neither he nor his compeers by night
 Giving him aid, my verse astonishèd,
 He, nor that affable familiar ghost
 Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
 As victors, of my silence cannot boast;
 I was not sick of any fear from thence;
 But when your countenance fill'd up his line
 Then lacked I matter, that enfeebled mine.

Professor Minto identifies this "greater spirit" with Chapman. Of this theory I shall presently speak. Mr. Gerald Massey points out that Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* was played at a rival theatre, and considers that the "Greater spirit by spirits



George Chapman
From an old copper print

taught to write above a mortal pitch" referred to the poet Marlowe, whom popular tradition considered (like his hero) to owe his talent to the assistance of a diabolical partner.

Certainly, the more we read Shakespeare, the more convinced do we become that all his phrases meant *something* even if the key to their significance is lost. The phrase about an "affable familiar ghost" means something,—why not this?

I find with Gerald Massey, that Marlowe is more fitly described than Chapman, often identified with the great rival; for Shakespeare evidently admired Marlowe, whom he quotes with approval in *As You Like It* and frequently imitates. It seems to me that he "makes fun" of Chapman and all his school of academic learning, his affected "Amorous Zodiacs" and "Schools of Night." Pedantry and affectation get some pretty hard hits in *Love's Labour's Lost* and it seems probable that *Troilus and Cressida* was a sort of parody of the heroic Greeks, then recently made familiar to Englishmen in Chapman's translation of Homer, and dedicated, by the way, to the Earl of Southampton.

There is an old tradition which connects the name of Florio with the original of the pedant Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost*. Personally, I am about ready to accept Mr. Acheson's well-argued conclusion that Chapman was intended by the poet as the person caricatured.

However, realising the passion which prevailed in those days for any sort of anagram (we have three contemporary anagrams for Southampton, of which "Stampe of Honour" was the most frequently employed), I am tempted to place before the reader a strange coincidence which struck me while I was meditating upon the peculiarity of the name of Holofernes, especially as associated with the other names in the play. Those of all the characters, except the palpable caricatures (Dull, Costard, and Sir Nathaniel), are of French origin, as the scene of the fanciful comedy is laid in Navarre.

Shakespeare has disclaimed the use of these verbal quips in sonnet 76:

Why is my verse so barren of new pride?
So far from variation or quick change?

Why with the time do I not glance aside
To *new found methods* and to *compounds strange*?

In spite of all this, the strange name of the pedant does form an anagram with the Elizabethan text as written by Florio himself:

IOHNFLORIO — HIOLOFERNE.

In looking into Florio's book, *Second Frutes, to be Gathered of Twelve Trees of Divers but Delightsome Tales*, we find that the book is prefaced by a sonnet inscribed, "Phaëton to his friend Florio." The signature of Phaëton is but a thin disguise to the authorship of this sonnet¹ and its selection is perhaps explained in the lines spoken by the

PHAËTON TO HIS FRIEND FLORIO

Sweet friend whose name agrees with thy increase,
How fit a rival art thou of the spring
For when each branch hath left off flourishing
And green lockt summer's shady pleasures cease:
She makes the winter storms repose in peace
And spends her franchise on each living thing,
The dazies sprout, the little birds do sing,
Herbes, gummes and plants do vaunt of their release.
So that when all our English wits lay dead
Except the laurel that is ever green
Thou with thy "Frutes" our barrenness o'erspread
And set thy flowery pleasance to be seen
Such Frutes, such flowrets of moralitie
Were ne'er before, brought out of Italy!

Duke when reproaching Valentine for his presumption (*Two Gentlemen of Verona*):

Why Phaëton, for thou art Merop's son,—
 Wilt thou aspire to guide the heavenly car? . . .
 Wilt thou reach stars, because they shine on thee?

If it is true that "friend Florio" may have had a sly fling at the English drama, we find the dramatist "getting even" with the learned band of Universitarians in *Love's Labour's Lost* where Biron exclaims:

These men have been at a great feast of languages
 and have stolen the scraps—

and again,

Study, is like the heavens' glorious sun, that will not
 be deep-searched with saucy looks:
 Small have continuous plodders ever won, save base
 authority from other's books—

"palpable hits!" either for Chapman or Florio.

It is most interesting to read in this connection what the unsuccessful rivals had to say about the "victorious pen" of Shakespeare.

Greene, addressing Marlow and Nash in a

tract entitled, *A Groat's Worth of Wit, Bought with a Million of Repentance*,¹ says:

There is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that with his Tygers heart wrapt in a players hide, supposes he is as able to bumbast out a blank-verse as the best of you; and being an absolute Johannes Factotum, is in his own conceit, the onlie Shake-scene in the country. . . .

Of course, the "Tygers heart wrapt in a players hide" is a parody of Shakespeare's own line in *Henry VI.*:

Oh Tyger's heart wrapt in a woman's hide,

and Greene's spite is comprehensible, considering that Shakespeare had made a triumphant success in adapting the dreary work of the other men referred to.

A few months after Greene's attack, his publisher, Chettle, printed another tract excusing himself from complicity:

I am as sorry as if the originall fault had been my fault, because myself have seene his [Shakespeare's]

¹ See Mr. Alfred Noyes' beautiful poem on this subject, "Coiner of Angels," in his *Tales of the Mermaid Inn*.

demeanour no lesse civil than he is excellent in the qualitie he professes, besides divers of worship have reported his uprightness of dealing, which argues his honesty, and his facetious grace in writing approves his art.

Nor is this the only testimonial to the great dramatist's character and charm. Ben Jonson's lines are too hackneyed to requote. Rowe says of him:

His exceeding candour and good nature must have inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him, as the power of his wit obliged the men of most delicate learning to admire him . . . he was a man of great sweetness in his manners and a most agreeable companion. He had the honour to meet with many great marks of favour and friendship from the Earl of Southampton, famous in the history of that time for his friendship with the unfortunate Essex; it was to that noble lord that he dedicated his poem *Venus and Adonis*. There is one instance so singular in the magnificence of this patron of Shakespeare that if I had not been assured that the story was from Sir William D'Avenant, I had not ventured to insert it—That my Lord Southampton at one time gave him a thousand pounds to enable him to carry through a purchase which he heard he had a mind to.

Aubrey says, in his *Brief Lives, Chiefly of Contemporaries*:

He was a handsome well shapt man: very good company, and of a readie and pleasant smoothe wit, Sir William d'Avenant has told me that he had a prodigious wit. . . . Though Ben Jonson says of him that "he had but little Latine and lesse Greek," he understood Latin pretty well.

It is certainly not far-fetched to attribute great importance to John Florio's acquaintance with Shakespeare. In *Love's Labour's Lost*, the first of the purely fanciful plays, a proverb in Italian, with its English translation, is quoted *verbatim*, from the *Second Frutes* of Florio. *The Tempest*, probably the last play, cites the description of an ideal republic, from Florio's translation of Montaigne.

The British Museum copy of this book bears on the fly-leaf the name of Shakespeare. I cannot participate in the learned discussion of experts upon the authenticity of this signature. It has the appearance of Shakespeare's writing, and as it is absolutely certain that the poet read Florio's

books, there seems to be nothing very strange in the idea that he owned a copy of one of them. As I said once before, why should we not apply the ordinary rules of common sense and probability even when dealing with a genius, and why decide with the critics that these authors hated one another unless we accept like proof of extreme enmity on the part of Mercutio to Romeo? Teasing and "guying" are used in the plays as a sign of friendly intimacy between the characters, and we have no shred of evidence to prove that any "unpleasantness" ever existed between Florio and Shakespeare; he who influenced the author's first and last work, may reasonably be supposed to have been in touch with him during the interval. One of the few things that we really know of Shakespeare is his fidelity to old ties. He never changed his company, but remained, through his whole career, associated with Hemmings, Condell and with Burbage until that actor's death. The two former are mentioned in his will.

Professor Furness has an interesting note on Florio in the Variorum *Love's Labour's Lost*. He quotes the author's will, which leaves his English

books and all his other goods to his beloved wife
Rose Florio,

Most heartily grieving and ever sorrowing that I
cannot leave or give her more in requital of her tender
love, loving care, painful diligence and continual
labour to me in all my fortunes and many sicknesses,
than whom never had husband a more loving wife,
painful nurse or comfortable consort.

Chapter V

Shakespeare as Seen through the Sonnets

CHAPTER V

SHAKESPEARE AS SEEN THROUGH THE SONNETS

WORDSWORTH says that Shakespeare used the sonnet as a key to unlock his heart.

It seems to me that through them he has projected his brain and personality in an immortal photograph, being himself conscious of the miracle by which

black ink should shine bright,

so that, as he says,

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme.

What light do the sonnets shed upon Shakespeare's own habits and tastes? To a careful reader they give a very sharp outline of both.

We find a person of great nervous susceptibility and sensitiveness whose qualities of heart are almost equal to those of his intelligence, of such

magnanimity and unselfishness that Professor Brandes speaks of the sonnets expressing self-effacement towards his friend and forgiveness of wrong as being "despicable, and leaving a very painful impression upon the reader." I have not read any criticism from Professor Brandes upon the New Testament, especially the text, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." I fear that his comments would be harsh. Certainly to another temper of mind these sonnets of resigned self-abnegation are the most marvellous poetic utterances in the English language.

The sonnets indicate a person devoted to his profession and "well-contented" in general, save for those special occasions when he particularly indicates that he is for some reason "out of suits with fortune"; then he seems to have the violent and brief attack of melancholy to which, a nature, generally optimistic, is apt to be occasionally the victim. It may be noticed that he constantly speaks of himself as being "dumb" before the Rival Poets, indicating that he had, especially in his early London days, a certain shyness, and remained rather a listener than a partaker in the

wit debates presided over by Southampton in the literary taverns. He expresses more impatience with pedantry than with ignorance, having evidently suffered much from the imputations upon his own want of classical learning from Sir Philip Sidney, Jonson, and others.

But his most bitter words are reserved to denounce fraud, affectation, and insincerity. He expresses a strong distaste for what is physically artificial also, paint and false hair, and exhibits, as in the plays, a passionate love for the beauties of nature, trees, flowers, birds, even an appreciation of landscape, rare in his time. A great comprehension of animals and sympathy for their sufferings is shown, and must have been regarded in his own day as far too sentimental; but what was then viewed as an eccentricity has become, with our changed point of view toward the hunter and the hunted, one of the points where the modern world best understands him. I have often thought that his early experience among his father's lambs, which sensitizes when it does not toughen, was perhaps the cause of his attitude toward the sufferings of the dumb brute.

The line in *Titus Andronicus* which describes the poor old father, after his terrible experience, wandering about reproaching the little Roman boys for killing flies, because perhaps "that fly had a father and a mother who could *feel*" was considered absurd by the critics of his day, and only excused because the old man was represented as being mad.

That Shakespeare suffered from the discredit attaching to his profession of player is evident from his works. Although at certain times actors were extremely "fashionable" and much petted, their legal status was among the vagabonds and mendicants, who were denied the privilege of Christian burial, and whose corpses fell an easy prey to the medical student and anatomist. This strikes me as being the real meaning of sonnet 74, which some critics have interpreted to mean a murderous attack on Shakespeare. No. 74 alludes to the poet's desire to be forgotten after death, by the friend on whom his intimacy has brought discredit. Mr. Acheson believes, and I think with reason, that the "vulgar scandal" referred to several times was the publication of *Willobie his Avis*



“The coward conquest of a wretche's knife”

From the painting by Rembrandt



in 1594 and 1596; at any rate, Shakespeare says that, as his friend has possessed that intimate essence of himself, his spirit, when the body dies he loses in it "only the dregs of life and prey of worms," perhaps the "coward conquest of a wretch's knife, too base by thee to be remembered."

In most of the plays the advantages of decent and Christian burial are spoken of in a tone very different from that which would be used by one to whom solemn sepulture was a matter of course, and, as I have before hinted, I believe that this same haunting fear is shown both in this sonnet and his Stratford epitaph. The distress which his equivocal situation causes him on his friend's account was likewise shown in his father's application for a coat-of-arms (granted under James I.). This was not at all the petty vanity of a parvenu, as Mr. Harris would have us think, but a very real advantage, raising its possessor from the rank of "vagabond" to the status of gentility, always noticed by his contemporaries; and, as is said in sonnet 26, this coat

Puts apparel on my tattered loving,
Making me worthy of thy sweet respect.

That Shakespeare himself had a very high ideal of an actor's life is plainly manifested in the plays which mention this calling; and that he used his art not only to chronicle his time, but also to shape public opinion and even to influence the political destinies of England, will be evident to all who follow, and agree with, my exposition of the part he played in the lives of Essex and Southampton.

For what reader can glance at the following Essex documents and fail to see the model for a favorite Shakespearian type?

Essex was in person tall and well-proportioned, with a countenance which, though not strictly handsome, possessed, on account of its bold, cheerful and amiable expression a wonderful power of fascination. He was brave, chivalrous, impulsive, imperious, sometimes with his equals but incapable of secret malice—A Patron of literature and himself a Poet.

In the latter connection I will quote from his farewell letter to the Queen on his departure to quell the Irish rebellion.

From a mind delighting in sorrow; from spirits wasted with passion; from a heart torn to pieces with grief, care and travel, what service can your Majesty

expect, since my service past deserves no more than banishment to the cursedest of Islands?

Your rebels pride and success may ransom myself out of this hateful prison; out of my loathed body; which if it happen so, your Majesty shall have no cause to mislike the fashion of my death, since the course of my life could never please you:

Happy he could finish forth his fate
 In some unhaunted desert, most obscure
 From all society, from love and hate
 Of worldly folk; then should he sleep secure;
 Then wake again, and yield God ever praise
 Content with trips and haws and brambleberry,
 In contemplation passing out his days. . . .
 Who, when he dies his tomb may be a bush
 Where harmless Robin dwells with gentle Thrush.

Your Majesty's exiled servant,

ROBERT ESSEX.

Lodge speaks of the letter written by Essex in answer to Egerton's remonstrance for his own rebellion against the Queen as showing the "truest picture extant of his political character; the grandeur of his mind and the tyranny of his passions; his habitual loyalty and republican inclinations in this admirable letter we find the following vivacious expressions."

When the vilest of all indignities are done unto me,

doth religion inforce me to sue? Doth God require it? Is it impiety not to do it? Why? Cannot Princes err? Cannot Subjects receive wrong? Is an earthly power infinite? Pardon me—pardon me my Lord; I can never subscribe to these principles. Let Solomon's fool laugh when he is stricken—Let those that mean to make their profit of Princes shew to have no sense of Prince's injuries. Let them acknowledge an infinite absoluteness on earth—that do not believe in an Infinite absoluteness in heaven—As for me I have received wrong! I feel it: My cause is good; I know it: and whatever comes, all the powers on earth can never shew more strength of constancy in oppressing, than I can shew in suffering whatsoever can or shall be imposed upon me.

I have grouped several sonnets under the heading "Insomnia." It has been often remarked that none could speak as he did in *Macbeth* and *Henry IV.*, of the restorative blessing of sleep, who had not suffered from its want, and that the writer of these plays must himself have experienced the nervous exhaustion so wonderfully described.

It is interesting to notice the corroboration given to this deduction, by the very plain statement in some of the "absence" sonnets that he has been deprived of the "benefit of rest."



Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex

From an old wood-cut print

The constantly recurring use of legal phraseology and metaphors has been a cause of much speculation, and even led some critics to believe that Shakespeare must have spent some time in the serious study, if not the practice, of law; it has led others to affirm that these poems could not have been written by Shakespeare at all but by the greatest lawyer of his time! I believe the "profound" knowledge of law evidenced by the sonnets is greatly exaggerated, and would term it rather "comprehensive" than deep. It is just such a facile mastery of the external part of the subject that a clever young man picks up from listening to conversation and assimilates without study. It is hard for us to realise how completely dependent the men of Elizabeth's day were on obtaining all news, and much of their education, from listening to the conversation round the Inn table. The Hennesseys and Dooleys of the *Swann* and the *Mermaid* were just as ready then as now to inform the ignorant and instruct the country bumpkin in the politics and talk of the town.

The Stratford records show that the Shake-

spere family had a pretty large experience of litigation, and in rural communities this always forms a staple commodity of conversation. It has been also remarked that a lawyer named Green was a member of the household at New Place. At any rate, it may be observed that Shakespeare shows absolutely no knowledge of foreign or international law, but only of ordinary common-law dealings, writs, warrants, grants, and leases, local sessions of court, attainders, etc., enough, in short, to prove that he was not without legal knowledge. But we need not therefore attribute to him the learning of a Lord Chancellor!

I have no doubt that Shakespeare listened to the gossip of the Inns of Court, and Middle Temple; that he heard Bacon expound after the manner so vividly described by John Aubrey, when, accompanied by three secretaries to set down his Lordship's witty remarks in "table books," he discoursed in language "nobly censorious" as Ben Jonson said, "commanding where he spoke so that his hearers could not cough, or look aside without loss." Even the admiring Aubrey could not refrain a sly hit at the Lord

Chancellor's ostentation; he tells us that "His Lordship was wont to say—'*I will lay my Manor of Gorambery on't*'—to which Judge Blank made a spiteful answer, saying that he would not hold a wager against that, but against any other Mannor of his Lordship's he would—Now this illustrious Lord Chancellor had only this mannor of Gorambery."¹

I cannot refrain from comparing the descriptions of Aubrey and Jonson with those lines in the *Merchant of Venice* concerning the self-important, pompous man, charged with weighty secrets, who always desires to convey to the bystander the idea, "I am Sir Oracle, and when I ope my lips let no dog bark."

It has always seemed to me most extraordinary that such a natural genius as we see in these writings should be placed on a lofty pinnacle of remoteness where only the initiated dare approach!

¹ In his Life of Dr. William Harvey, author of *De Circulatione Sanguinis* and to whom the discovery of circulation of the blood is generally attributed, Aubrey says:

"He had been Physitian to the Lord Chancellor Bacon, whom he esteemed much for his witt and style, but would not allow him to be a great philosopher. 'He writes philosophy like a Lord Chancellor,' said he to me, speaking in derision. 'I have cured him.'"

That one whose chief characteristics were his frank exuberance, tolerance, charity, and generous self-effacement, should have his works attributed to one of the dryest and most heartless (if the most intelligent) of the Bar's great lights—Francis Bacon.

In regard to Bacon's rôle in the Essex conspiracy, I have carefully selected a document written before the "Bacon-Shakespeare Controversy."

I may add that more modern research has tended to blacken his character even more in this connection.

It seems strange that Bacon, who was a nephew of the Lord High Treasurer and cousin of the Secretary of State, Cecil, should never have been able to obtain any office in the Court of Elizabeth. The reason possibly was that he early attached himself to the faction of the Earl of Essex, who, though the Queen's greatest favourite, was in constant opposition to her Ministers. This unfortunate nobleman exerted himself to the utmost, at the risk of offending his testy mistress, to secure for Bacon the place of Solicitor General, but he was unsuccessful. The Ministers declared the belief that Bacon was merely a theorist,

and his talents were not of a nature fitted for practical purposes. To make some amends to his friend for this disappointment, Essex gave him an estate out of his private fortune: one of many kindnesses which Bacon too ill requited.

In the trial of the Earl of Essex for high treason (1601) Bacon appeared as counsel for the Crown; and after the execution of that unfortunate nobleman, the Queen directed him to publish *An Account of the Earl of Essex's Treasons*. His apparent zeal on this occasion excited the indignation of the people, among whom Essex was much beloved, and he was obliged to apologize for his conduct.

The character of Bacon has been held up as an extraordinary anomaly, as containing the extremes of strength and weakness. Pope was pleased to call him:

“The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind.” The wrong he did to Essex is perhaps the strongest stain that remains on his memory. He was constitutionally timid and always in weak health.

Knight's Gallery of Portraits. London, 1837.

I find it most interesting to let Shakespeare himself answer the reasoning which argues that wisdom can only be acquired in a university, and not in the great school of struggling humanity. Just such a case as his own is discussed by two of

his characters, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Ely, who speak of the miracle of Prince Hal's suddenly awakened talents.

Canterbury says:

The courses of his youth promised it not. . . .
 Never was such a sudden scholar made . . .
 Hear him but reason on divinity,
 And all admiring, with an inward wish
 You would desire the King were made a prelate:
 Hear him debate on Commonwealth affairs
 You would say it hath been, all in all his study: . . .
 Turn him to any cause of policy
 The Gordian knot of it he will unloose
 Familiar as his garter: That when he speaks
 The air, a chartered libertine, is still
 And the mute wonder lurketh in men's ears
 To steal his sweet and honeyed sentences;
 So that the art and PRACTIC PART OF LIFE
 MUST BE THE MISTRESS TO THIS THEORIC:
 Which is a wonder how his grace should glean it
 SINCE HIS ADDICTION WAS TO COURSES VAIN,
 HIS COMPANIES UNLETTERED, RUDE AND SHALLOW,
 HIS HOURS FILLED UP WITH RIOTS, BANQUETS, SPORTS,
 AND NEVER NOTED IN HIM ANY STUDY,
 ANY RETIREMENT, ANY SEQUESTRATION
 FROM OPEN HAUNTS AND POPULARITY.

The Archbishop of Ely replies:

The strawberry grows underneath the nettle,
 And wholesome berries thrive and ripen best

Neighbour'd by fruit of baser quality:
 And so the prince obscur'd his contemplation
 Under the veil of wildness; which, no doubt,
 Grew like the summer grass, fastest by night,
 Unseen, yet cresce in his faculty.

Canterbury: It must be so; for miracles are ceas'd,
 And therefore we must needs admit the means
 How things are perfected.

So did the genius of William Shakespeare
 "thrive and ripen" in the woods of Charlecote in
 his musings by the trout brook of which his Jaques
 tells us, or hiding in the hollow oak with Justice
 Shallow's deer. And like Prince Hal, his talents
 "grew like the summer grass" among his wild
 Stratford companions, "unseen, yet cresce in his
 faculty."

He himself has given us the best defence of
 Shakespearian authorship, for as Canterbury says:

It must be so, for miracles are ceas'd,
 And therefore we *must needs admit the means*
How things are perfected.

A strong religious sentiment is evinced in the
 sonnets, as in all the writings of Shakespeare. We
 may note his complete acceptance of the universe

as God made it, his confidence in the perfectibility of man, and especially his belief in the growth and purification of the soul through suffering, even through sin. Charity, kindness, and great tolerance of all but "intolerance" are shown in these poems, although in the sonnets there is no occasion to exhibit, as in the plays, his particular aversions: fanatical Puritanism, "special grace," and the doctrine of Pythagoras. A strongly marked belief is shown, even at this time, in two essentially Catholic doctrines: salvation by vicarious atonement, and the sacramental character of marriage.

See Juliet's argument on this subject:

My husband is on earth, my faith in heaven;
How shall that faith return again to earth,
Unless that husband send it me from heaven by
leaving earth?

and also the priest's definition of marriage in *Twelfth Night*—which begins:

A contract of eternal bond of love
Confirm'd by mutual joinder of your hands.
Attested by the holy close of lips,
Strengthened by interchangement of your rings;
And all the ceremony of this compact
Seal'd in my function, by my testimony.

These beliefs, together with the first sentence in his will¹ seem to confirm the line which terminates the earliest biographical record concerning Shakespeare: the manuscript notes written by the Reverend Dr. Fulman, which are buried in the archives of the Corpus Christi College at Oxford, and which end with the words, "He dyed a Papist."

The Reverend Alexander Dyce is about the only one of Shakespeare's commentators who has had the sincerity to mention this sentence in the notes of Fulman; others, even Sir Sidney Lee, pass over in silence this unpopular idea.

I shall set down in full what Dr. Dyce has to say upon this subject:²

A curious illustration of his domestic life at Stratford during the year 1614, is furnished by an article in the Chamberlain's accounts. "Item:—For one

¹ Shakespeare's will is dated on the fifth day of March, 1616, and begins:

"In the name of God, Amen. I, William Shaksper, of Stratford-on-Avon, in the County of Warwick, gent., in perfect health and memory (God be praised) do make and ordain this my last will and testament in manner and form following:

First, I commend my soul into the hands of God my creator, hoping, and assuredly believing, through the only merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, to be made partaker of life everlasting; and my body to the earth whereof it is made."

²Alexander Dyce, *Shakespeare* (1857), vol. i., page cxi.

quart sack and one quart clarett winne given to a preacher at the New Place xx d." As the corporation had issued a strict prohibition against the performance of plays in Stratford, we cannot doubt that the divine thus refreshed at their expense was a Puritan; with such preachers Shakespeare could have had little sympathy; and perhaps he lent his house on the occasion mentioned in compliance with the wishes of his family¹ whom he was too liberal minded to oppose. In connection with the above entry Mr. Halliwell has a remark which I must be allowed to say I think quite erroneous, "Shakespeare's own departure was probably soothed by the presence of the religious friends of the Halls: but there is, unfortunately, a testimony in the epitaph on his daughter which implies that his life had not been one of piety:

"Witty above her sex, but that 's not all,
 Wise to salvation was good Mistress Hall,
 Something of Shakespeare was in that, but this
 Wholy of Him with whom she 's now in blisse."

Assuredly the writer of the epitaph had no intention of imputing a want of piety to Shakespeare; his meaning clearly was that the wit (*i. e.*, mental power) which raised Mistress Hall above the level of her sex was derived from her father, but that by Divine Grace

¹ Or more probably in ignorance of them, as he was at the time on a business trip to London.—C. L. C.

alone, she had attained the wisdom which leads to salvation. Here too may be noticed the tradition preserved by the Reverend Dr. Richard Davies that Shakespeare died a Papist.

“He dyed a Papist,” are the concluding words of Davies’ additions, to the article on Shakespeare, in Fulman’s collections, which, comments Mr. Dyce,

is contradicted by the general tenor of his writings as well as by the whole history of his life, nor is it improbable that this tradition originated with the Puritan party at Stratford, for Shakespeare, who could hardly have avoided all discussion on the controverted religious topics of the day, may have incidentally let fall expressions unfavourable to Puritanism, which afterward were misrepresented as “Papistical.”

The present writer is not a Catholic, but she has sincerely tried to maintain an impartial attitude towards all evidences, whatsoever they be, connected with the life of Shakespeare. The Reverend Dr. Davies must have had pretty definite information that, before dying, Shakespeare took the sacraments of the Catholic Church, or he would not have set it down; for being, like Fulman, “a stanch supporter of the Church of England,

and enemy to Popery and Fanaticism," he must have recorded this fact not because he liked it, but because he believed it to be true. An impartial observer is inclined to question Dr. Dyce's statement that, "his whole life and writings contradict this statement." We know little in detail of Shakespeare's life, but there is nothing which we do know that especially differentiates it from the lives of others in the literary or theatrical profession,—Ben Jonson and William d'Avenant, for instance, both of whom were Catholics, as was also the actor Lacey, who at eighty was noted by Aubrey as being "the man who knew the most about Shakespeare now still living."

I have mentioned above that in his early writings I notice a decided trend toward Catholic doctrine. The terrible persecutions undergone by the Catholics in Elizabeth's reign (see *Stowe's Annals*) and the narrow Puritanism of the Stratford municipality might be inclined to turn a mind so magnanimous toward the side of the persecuted. I believe that he was much influenced by the life of the old priest William Lacey, one of the most learned graduates of Oxford, and at one time



Sir William d'Avenant

From an engraving by W. H. Worthington, after the drawing by J. Thurston

a celebrated controversial writer, who spent his last years in caring for the sick in the poorest quarters of the town and in the preparation of medicines, in spite of the Elizabethan statute which held the lives of all "seminary priests" forfeit, and condemned to death any who housed or comforted a Jesuit. I have always thought that it was this old priest who suggested the beautiful character of Friar Laurence, in *Romeo and Juliet*, and when we read in Wood's *Athenæ Oxoniensis* that this old man was taken in, when dying, by the Catholic hostess of the Dolphin Inn, a vista of interesting speculation is opened, especially when we remember that Sir William d'Avenant was known to the Puritans as a

Dog of Rome

and that the name of the D'Avenants' inn, before it was called the "Crown," remains one of the many Shakespearian mysteries.

Whatever the truth may be, it seems of relatively small importance to know what special creed was held by one whom those of all creeds claim.

Whether saint or sinner, one thing is certain:
Shakespeare's genius lifted him above our mortal
earth and made him one who

. . . trod

The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance
Struck one clear chord, to reach the ears of God.

Chapter VI

Descriptive Analysis of the Sonnets

CHAPTER VI

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SONNETS

BEFORE presenting to the reader the texts of the sonnets themselves, it seems necessary briefly to describe their subjects and note the historical allusions which they contain.

One word upon the grouping which I have thought best to adopt: I have retained Thorpe's idea of *separate series*, dividing, as he does, the sonnets according to their inspirers: A man and a woman.

I have reserved Thorpe's incomplete third series to place therein a later sequence dedicated to Southampton, the inspirer of Series I. This arrangement takes account of the lapse of three years' time of estrangement mentioned in the later sonnets and also observes the rules of logic and common sense which place a reconciliation after, and not before, the cause of quarrel. I there-

fore interpolate the "Dark Lady" series between Series I. and Series III., addressed to Southampton.

Each series is subdivided into groups according to subject; this disposition often concords with Thorpe's arrangement, which I have respected as much as possible,¹ maintaining for each sonnet the numbering used by the first publisher.

These groups seem each to have formed a

¹ Perhaps the most obvious examples of the occasional disorder in Thorpe's arrangement is contained in the group dealing with the "Rival Poets." No. 80 describes a "greater spirit" under the figure of a stately "Man o' War," while the poet himself is compared to a humble skiff. The succeeding sonnets treat of quite other things, until No. 86, which again takes up the ship metaphor and begins:

"Was it the proud full sail of his great verse
Bound for the prize of all too precious you
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse?" etc.

It seems quite evident that 86 should immediately follow 80. No. 66 is one of the only completely discouraged and pessimistic of the sonnets. It begins:

"Tired with all these, for restful death I cry!"

It should obviously follow a previous sonnet quite melancholy in tone, or containing an enumeration of grievances. There is only one such in the collection, its number is 28, and it belongs to the "Insomnia" group. The final lines are:

"But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer
And Night doth nightly make grief's strength seem stronger."

If this is followed by 66—"Tired with all these, for restful death I cry!" the reader will find the grammatical connection and sequence of thought which are lacking in Thorpe's arrangement.

separate epistle sent by the Poet to his friend on Time, Change, Absence, etc. And were evidently incorporated by him in the "book" so often referred to in the sonnets.

I have allowed myself to indicate the subject of each separate group by a descriptive title as shown in the following index; this will, I think, facilitate the reading of Shakespeare's dramatic poem as a whole.

SERIES I

To Southampton

- Group 1. Shakespeare praises patron and counsels marriage. (21 sonnets.)
- Group 2. Growth of friendship—Contrasts the patron's youth and high estate with the poet's own age and humble condition. (29 sonnets.)
- Group 3. The rival poets. (16 sonnets.)
- Group 4. Absence and insomnia. (16 sonnets.)
- Group 5. Disappointment—Slander—Farewell. (23 sonnets.)

SERIES II

To the Dark Lady

- Group 1. Remedy for sorrow in love. (2 sonnets.)

- Group 2. Praise of brunette beauty—Badinage. (8 sonnets.)
- Group 3. Reproach for cruelty and unfaithfulness. (8 sonnets.)
- Group 4. Rivalry with friend. (6 sonnets.)
- Group 5. Love's blindness. (4 sonnets.)
- Group 6. Profane love—Salvation. (2 sonnets.)

SERIES III

To Southampton

- Group 1. Apologia — Renewal of friendship — Fame's conquest over time. (13 sonnets.)
- Group 2. Epithalamium. (1 sonnet.)
- Group 3. Political allusions. (2 sonnets.)
- Group 4. The poet's apology for giving away his copy of the sonnets—Celebration of Southampton's release from the Tower. (3 sonnets.)

In reading *Group 1* of Series I. we may remember that, in his early manhood, a match had been arranged for Southampton with the great Prime Minister's granddaughter, Elizabeth Vere. This union was much desired by the young Earl's mother and friends, but he himself was not well

disposed towards it, and the engagement was ultimately broken.

— *Group 2* describes the growth of friendship between poet and patron, and compares the high estate of the one with the poverty of the other. The dominant idea contained is that in spite of his own humble station and discredited calling the poet feels himself to be so rich in Southampton's friendship that he would not change his state with kings. In No. 38 he invites his friend to add value to the book of sonnets by inscribing in its blank leaves some original efforts, and some symptoms of "cooling off" on the part of the patron cause the author to steel himself to endure misunderstanding and desertion, knowing, as he says, better than any one his own unworthiness. No. 74 alludes to the probable fate of the actor's mortal remains, which the statute of Queen Elizabeth would consign to the potter's field or bone shop.

Group 3 is consecrated to a description of the literary rivals for Southampton's favour. He says that "every alien pen" is addressing his patron, who has taught the ignorant to fly, the dumb to sing, added feathers to the wings of learning, and

given majesty to the graceful. He compares his own simple and truthful muse to the strained rhetoric of one poet who searches heaven itself for comparisons with his love. This poet I take to be Chapman, whose "Amorous Zodiac" and "School of Night," perfectly answer this description. Of one poet he speaks with real admiration as a "greater spirit," comparing him to a tall vessel and himself to an humble skiff. This I believe to be Christopher Marlowe, author of *Dr. Faustus*.

A long absence from London is mentioned in *Group 4*. The London theatres were closed on account of the plague in the years 1593 and 1594, and Shakespeare's company "toured the provinces." Thus the absence spoken of would seem to have been a long one, and to have concurred with these dates.

In *Group 5* we begin to see that a misunderstanding has grown up between the friends; two bitterly satirical sonnets reproach him for a broken engagement. Slander has evidently been set on foot to harm the poet (*Willobie his Avisas?*), but he declares himself much less at fault than his traducers and expresses his intention of remaining

deaf to either praise or criticism except from his patron. This leads into an arraignment of the friend for the dissipated life which he has begun to lead and warns him that as he is superior to other men through his beauty, intelligence, and fortune, so all these misused will make him fall lower than ordinary mortals—"Lilies that fester, smell far worse than weeds."

The first allusion to personal rivalry between the friends and the infidelity of the poet's mistress occurs in Thorpe's Nos. 41 and 42. These two stanzas form the contrasting couple to those describing the "worser spirit" and should form part of the same group in Series II.

Group 1 of Series II. (To the Dark Lady) opens with two sonnets describing a visit to a thermal bath whose heat the poet fancifully explains as due to Cupid's arrows having been quenched in the cool spring. "A sad distempered guest," he sought cure at these wells but found none, his only help being at the source of Cupid's fire, his mistress's eyes.

Group 2 is in light complimentary vein. It jests

on the lady's dark complexion and makes frequent puns on her obstinate will and the poet's name.

The tone deepens in *Group 3* and reproaches the lady for cruelty and want of faith.

Group 4 describes his rivalry with his friend for the lady's favours.

Group 5 is very bitter and tragic, bewailing the enchantment which holds him in bondage despite his real knowledge of the moral worthlessness of his idol.

Group 6 consists of two sonnets contrasting profane love with holiness through renunciation. This same idea is found beautifully expressed in *The Merchant of Venice*, where the grossness of the body is spoken of as being the principal detriment to the soul's comprehension of the will of God.

Series III. reopens a sequence to Southampton. *Group 1* contains an apology for having made his friend suffer as he once suffered himself from the other's neglect. And he again promises him Fame's conquest over time through his immortal poems.

Group 2 is the celebration of Southampton's

marriage to Miss Vernon in the face of every impediment which Court intrigue and family opposition could place in the lover's way.

Group 3 contains allusions to the "Fools of Time"—or those who let self-interest and fortune affect their acts and lives. These sonnets probably refer to some evil influence in Southampton's life¹ (per-

¹From Aubrey, vol. i.

"Sir John Danvers

"d. 1594

"Sir John Danvers, the father, was a most beautiful and good and even tempered person, his picture is yet extant—my cosen John Danvers (his son) haz it. He was of a mild and peaceable nature and his sonnes' sad accident brake his heart.

[Henry, brother of Sir Robert Long, was killed, possibly in a fair fight by Sir Charles, brother of Henry Danvers. In consequence the Danvers brothers had to seek safety in France, having been hidden from pursuit, and their escape contrived by the Earl of Southampton.]

"Sir Charles Danvers was beheaded on Tower Hill with Robert, Earle of Essex, February the sixth, 1601, vide Stowe's *Chronicle*, where is a full account of his and the Earle's deportment on the scaffold. Sir Charles Danvers advised the Earl of Essex either to treat with the Queen, or to make his way through the gate of Essex-House and then to hast away to High-gate, and so to Northumberland (the Earl of Northumberland married his mother's sister) and from thence to the King of Scots, and there they might make their peace; if not the Queen was old and could not live long. But the Earle followed not his advice, and so they both lost their heads on Tower Hill.

"With all their failings Wiltshire cannot shew the like two such brothers (Charles and Henry Danvers). His familiar acquaintances were Sir Francis and Sir Horace Vere; Sir Walter Rawleigh etc.—the heroes of those times."

haps one of the Essex conspirators, hanged as they said, in a speech from the scaffold, in the cause of virtue).

Group 4 contains the poet's reasons for making a gift of his own copy of the sonnets, "needing no external adjunct to remember what was inscribed in his brain," and concludes with a stanza celebrating Southampton's release from the Tower, April 10, 1603.

Chapter VII

The Sonnets Grouped by Subjects

SERIES I

TO SOUTHAMPTON

Group I

Shakespeare Praises Patron and Counsels Marriage

I

From fairest creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose might never die,
But as the riper should by time decease,
His tender heir might bear his memory:
But thou, contracted to thine own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abundance lies,
Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament
And only herald to the gaudy spring,
Within thine own bud buriest thy content
And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding.

Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

2

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,
Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an ill-eating shame and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If thou couldst answer "This fair child of mine
Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,"
Proving his beauty by succession thine!

This were to be new made when thou art old,
And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

3

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother.
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?
Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see,
Despite of wrinkles, this thy golden time.

But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

4

Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?
Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,
And being frank, she lends to those are free.
Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse
The bounteous largess given thee to give?
Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?
For having traffic with thyself alone,
Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive.
Then how, when nature calls thee to be gone,
What acceptable audit canst thou leave?

Thy unused beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
Which, used, lives th' executor to be.

5

Those hours that with gentle work did frame
 The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell,
 Will play the tyrants to the very same
 And that unfair which fairly doth excel:
 For never-resting time leads summer on
 To hideous winter and confounds him there;
 Sap check'd with frost and lusty leaves quite gone,
 Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness everywhere:
 Then, were not summer's distillation left,
 A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
 Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
 Nor it, nor no remembrance what it was:
 But flowers distill'd, though they with winter
 meet,
 Leese but their show; their substance still lives
 sweet.

6

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
 In thee thy summer, ere thou be distill'd:
 Make sweet some vial; treasure thou some place
 With beauty's treasure, ere it be self-kill'd.
 That use is not forbidden usury,
 Which happies those that pay the willing loan;
 That 's for thyself to breed another thee,
 Or ten times happier, be it ten for one;
 Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
 If ten of thine ten times refigured thee:
 Then what could death do, if thou shouldst depart,
 Leaving thee living in posterity?
 Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair
 To be death's conquest and make worms thine
 heir.

7

Lo, in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car,
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract, and look another way:
 So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,
 Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.

8

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.
Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering;
Resembling sire and child and happy mother,
Who, all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
 Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
 Sings this to thee: "Thou single wilt prove none."

9

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye
That thou consumest thyself in single life?
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die,
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;
The world will be thy widow, and still weep
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,
When every private widow well may keep
By children's eyes her husband's shape in mind.
Look, what an unthrift in the world doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still the world enjoys it;
But beauty's waste hath in the world an end,
And kept unused, the user so destroys it.

No love toward others in that bosom sits
That on himself such murderous shame commits.

10

For shame! deny that thou bear'st love to any,
Who for thyself art so unprovident.
Grant, if thou wilt, thou art beloved of many,
But that thou none lovest is most evident;
For thou art so possess'd with murderous hate
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to repair should be thy chief desire.
O, change thy thought, that I may change my mind!
Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love?
Be, as thy presence is, gracious and kind,
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove:
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

II

As fast as thou shalt wane, so fast thou grow'st
 In one of thine, from that which thou departest;
 And that fresh blood which youngly thou bestow'st
 Thou mayst call thine when thou from youth con-
 vertest.

Herein lives wisdom, beauty and increase;
 Without this, folly, age and cold decay:
 If all were minded so, the times should cease
 And threescore year would make the world away.
 Let those whom Nature hath not made for store,
 Harsh, featureless and rude, barrenly perish:
 Look, whom she best endow'd she gave the more;
 Which bounteous gift thou shouldst in bounty cherish:
 She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby
 Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die.

12

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
 And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
 When I behold the violet past prime,
 And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;
 When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
 Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
 And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
 Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
 Then of thy beauty do I question make,
 That thou among the wastes of time must go,
 Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
 And die as fast as they see others grow;
 And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make
 defence
 Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee
 hence.

13

O, that you were yourself! but, love, you are
No longer yours than you yourself here live:
Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other give.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination; then you were
Yourself again, after yourself's decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear.
Who lets so fair a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might uphold
Against the stormy gusts of winter's day
And barren rage of death's eternal cold?

O, none but unthrifths: dear my love, you know
You had a father; let your son say so.

14

Not from the stars do I my judgment pluck;
And yet methinks I have astronomy,
But not to tell of good or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality;
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell,
Pointing to each his thunder, rain and wind,
Or say with princes if it shall go well,
By oft predict that I in heaven find:
But from thine eyes my knowledge I derive,
And, constant stars, in them I read such art,
As truth and beauty shall together thrive,
If from thyself to store thou wouldst convert;
Or else of thee this I prognosticate:
Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

15

When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your day of youth to sullied night;
 And all in war with Time for love of you,
 As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

16

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers
Much liker than your painted counterfeit:
So should the lines of life that life repair,
Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen,
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair,
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men.
 To give away yourself keeps yourself still;
 And you must live, drawn by your own sweet skill.

17

Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?
Though yet, heaven knows, it is but as a tomb
Which hides your life and shows not half your parts.
If I could write the beauty of your eyes
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say "This poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces."
So should my papers, yellowed with their age,
Be scorn'd, like old men of less truth than tongue,
And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage
And stretched metre of an antique song:
 But were some child of yours alive that time,
 You should live twice, in it and in my rhyme.

18

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest;
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st:
 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
 So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

19

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
 And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;
 Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
 And burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood;
 Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
 And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,
 To the wide world and all her fading sweets;
 But I forbid thee one most heinous crime:
 O, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
 Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen;
 Him in thy course untainted do allow
 For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.

Yet do thy worst, old Time: despite thy wrong,
 My love shall in my verse ever live young.

20

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
 Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
 A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
 With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
 An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
 Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
 A man in hue, all "hues" in his controlling,
 Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
 And for a woman wert thou first created;
 Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,
 And by addition me of thee defeated,
 By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.

But since she prick'd thee out for women's
 pleasure,

Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their
 treasure.

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,
To thee I send this written ambassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it;
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair aspect,
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect:
Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee;
Till then not show my head where thou mayst prove
me.

Group 2

*Growth of Friendship—Contrasts the Patron's Youth
and High Estate with the Poet's own Age
and Humble Condition*

39

O, how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is 't but mine own when I praise thee?
Even for this let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one,
That by this separation I may give
That due to thee which thou deservest alone.
O absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave
To entertain the time with thoughts of love,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth deceive,
And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here who doth hence remain!

62

Sin of self-love possesseth all mine eye
And all my soul and all my every part;
And for this sin there is no remedy,
It is so grounded inward in my heart.
Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.
'T is thee, myself, that for myself I praise
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

75

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground;
And for the peace of you I hold such strife
As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found;
Now proud as an enjoyer, and anon
Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure;
Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then better'd that the world may see my pleasure:
Sometime all full with feasting on your sight,
And by and by clean starved for a look;
Possessing or pursuing no delight,
Save what is had or must from you be took.
 Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
 Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

22

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,
So long as youth and thou are of one date;
But when in thee time's furrows I behold,
Then look I death my days should expiate.
For all that beauty that doth cover thee
Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,
Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me:
How can I then be elder than thou art?
O, therefore, love, be of thyself so wary
As I, not for myself, but for thee will;
Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.
 Presume not on thy heart when mine is slain;
 Thou gavest me thine, not to give back again.

73

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.

 This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more
 strong,

 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

74

But be contented: when that fell arrest
Without all bail shall carry me away,
My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
The very part was consecrate to thee:
The earth can have but earth, which is his due;
My spirit is thine, the better part of me:
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The prey of worms, my body being dead;
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,
Too base of thee to be remembered.

 The worth of that is that which it contains,
 And that is this, and this with thee remains.

59 ✓

If there be nothing new, but that which is
Hath been before, how are our brains beguiled,
Which, labouring for invention, bear amiss
The second burthen of a former child!

O, that record could with a backward look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your image in some antique book,
Since mind at first in character was done.
That I might see what the old world could say
To this composed wonder of your frame;
Whether we are mended, or whether better they,
Or whether revolution be the same.

O, sure I am, the wits of former days
To subjects worse have given admiring praise.

53

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?
Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new:
Speak of the spring and foison of the year,
The one doth shadow of your beauty show,
The other as your bounty doth appear;
And you in every blessed shape we know.

In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

✓ When in the chronicle of wasted time
 I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
 And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
 In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
 Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
 Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
 I see their antique pen would have express'd
 Even such a beauty as you master now.
 So all their praises are but prophecies
 Of this our time, all you prefiguring;
 And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
 They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
 For we, which now behold these present days,
 Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

Thus is his cheek the map of days outworn,
 When beauty lived and died as flowers do now,
 Before these bastard signs of fair were born,
 Or durst inhabit on a living brow;
 Before the golden tresses of the dead,
 The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
 To live a second life on second head;
 Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay:
 In him those holy antique hours are seen,
 Without all ornament itself and true,
 Making no summer of another's green,
 Robbing no old to dress his beauty new;
 And him as for a map doth Nature store,
 To show false Art what beauty was of yore.

126

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;
Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st
Thy lovers withering as thy sweet self grow'st;
If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack,
As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back,
She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill.
Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure!
She may detain, but not still keep, her treasure:
Her audit, though delay'd, answer'd must be
And her quietus is to render thee.

37

As a decrepit father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by fortune's dearest spite,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth;
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Entitled in thy parts do crowned sit,
I make my love engrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despised,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance give
That I in thy abundance am sufficed
And by a part of all thy glory live.
Look, what is best, that best I wish in thee:
This wish I have; then ten times happy me!

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their body's force;
Some in their garments, though new-fangled ill;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse;
And every humour hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest:
But these particulars are not my measure;
All these I better in one general best.
Thy love is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments' cost,
Of more delight than hawks or horses be;
And having thee, of all men's pride I boast:
 Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take
 All this away and me most wretched make.

How careful was I, when I took my way,
Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,
That to my use it might unused stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust!
But thou, to whom my jewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest grief,
Thou, best of dearest and mine only care,
Art left the prey of every vulgar thief.
Thee have I not lock'd up in any chest,
Save where thou art not, though I feel thou art,
Within the gentle closure of my breast,
From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and part;
 And even thence thou wilt be stol'n, I fear,
 For truth proves thievish for a prize so dear.

54

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye
As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses:
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected fade;
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:
 And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
 When that shall vade, by verse distills your truth.

105

Let not my love be call'd idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,
Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.
Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind,
Still constant in a wondrous excellence;
Therefore my verse to constancy confined,
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
"Fair, kind, and true," is all my argument,
"Fair, kind, and true," varying to other words;
And in this change is my invention spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
 "Fair, kind, and true," have often lived alone,
 Which three till now never kept seat in one.

Let those who are in favour with their stars
 Of public honour and proud titles boast,
 Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,
 Unlook'd for joy in that I honour most.
 Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread
 But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
 And in themselves their pride lies buried,
 For at a frown they in their glory die.
 The painful warrior famoused for fight,
 After a thousand victories once foil'd,
 Is from the book of honour razed quite,
 And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd:
 Then happy I, that love and am beloved
 Where I may not remove nor be removed.

So am I as the rich, whose blessed key
 Can bring him to his sweet up-locked treasure,
 The which he will not every hour survey,
 For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
 Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
 Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,
 Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
 Or captain jewels in the carcanet.
 So is the time that keeps you as my chest,
 Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide,
 To make some special instant special blest,
 By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.

 Blessed are you, whose worthiness gives scope,
 Being had, to triumph, being lack'd, to hope.

29

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth
brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

30

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All losses are restored and sorrows end.

31

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
 Which I by lacking have supposed dead;
 And there reigns love, and all love's loving parts,
 And all those friends which I thought buried.
 How many a holy and obsequious tear
 Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye,
 As interest of the dead, which now appear
 But things removed that hidden in thee lie!
 Thou art the grave where buried love doth live,
 Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
 Who all their parts of me to thee did give:
 That due of many now is thine alone:
 Their images I loved I view in thee,
 And thou, all they, hast all the all of me.



71

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
 Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
 Give warning to the world that I am fled
 From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not
 The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
 If thinking on me then should make you woe.
 O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
 When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
 Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
 But let your love even with my life decay;
 Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
 And mock you with me after I am gone.

49

Against that time, if ever that time come,
When I shall see thee frown on my defects,
When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,
Call'd to that audit by advised respects;
Against that time when thou shalt strangely pass,
And scarcely greet me with that sun, thine eye,
When love, converted from the thing it was,
Shall reasons find of settled gravity;
Against that time do I ensconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine own desert,
And this my hand against myself uprear,
To guard the lawful reasons on thy part:
 To leave poor me thou hast the strength of laws,
 Since why to love I can allege no cause.

88

When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,
And place my merit in the eye of scorn,
Upon thy side against myself I 'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn.
With mine own weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a story
Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted;
That thou in losing me shalt win much glory:
And I by this will be a gainer too;
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,
The injuries that to myself I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.
 Such is my love, to thee I so belong,
 That for thy right myself will bear all wrong.

89

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that offence:
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt,
Against thy reasons making no defence.
Thou canst not, love, disgrace me half so ill,
To set a form upon desired change,
As I 'll myself disgrace; knowing thy will,
I will acquaintance strangle and look strange;
Be absent from thy walks; and in my tongue
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell,
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong,
And haply of our old acquaintance tell.

For thee, against myself I 'll vow debate,
For I must ne'er love him whom thou dost hate.

90

Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now;
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after-loss:
Ah, do not, when my heart hath 'scaped this sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe;
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last,
When other petty griefs have done their spite,
But in the onset come: so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might;
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compared with loss of thee will not seem so.

72

O, lest the world should task you to recite
What merit lived in me, that you should love
After my death, dear love, forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy prove;
Unless you would devise some virtuous lie,
To do more for me than mine own desert,
And hang more praise upon deceased I
Than niggard truth would willingly impart:
O, lest your true love may seem false in this,
That you for love speak well of me untrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And live no more to shame nor me nor you.

For I am shamed by that which I bring forth,
And so should you, to love things nothing worth.

92

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,
For term of life thou art assured mine;
And life no longer than thy love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end.
I see a better state to me belongs
Than that which on thy humour doth depend:
Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie.
O, what a happy title do I find,
Happy to have thy love, happy to die!

But what's so blessed-fair that fears no blot?
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

So shall I live, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceived husband; so love's face
May still seem love to me, though alter'd new;
Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place:
For there can live no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change.
In many's looks the false heart's history
Is writ in moods and frowns and wrinkles strange,
But heaven in thy creation did decree
That in thy face sweet love should ever dwell;
Whate'er thy thoughts or thy heart's workings be,
Thy looks should nothing thence but sweetness tell.
 How like Eve's apple doth thy beauty grow,
 If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show.

Group 3

The Rival Poets

23

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might.
O, let my books be then the eloquence
And dumb presagers of my speaking breast;
Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
More than that tongue that more hath more express'd.
O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

103

Alack, what poverty my Muse brings forth,
That having such a scope to show her pride,
The argument, all bare, is of more worth
Than when it hath my added praise beside!
O, blame me not, if I no more can write!
Look in your glass, and there appears a face
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,
Dulling my lines and doing me disgrace.
Were it not sinful then, striving to mend,
To mar the subject that before was well?
For to no other pass my verses tend
Than of your graces and your gifts to tell;
And more, much more, than in my verse can sit,
Your own glass shows you when you look in it.

38

How can my Muse want subject to invent,
 While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my verse
 Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
 For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
 O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
 Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
 For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
 When thou thyself dost give invention light?
 Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
 Than those old nine which rhymers invoke;
 And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
 Eternal numbers to outlive long date.

If my slight Muse do please these curious days,
 The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

32

If thou survive my well-contented day,
 When that churl Death my bones with dust shall
 cover,
 And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
 These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
 Compare them with the bettering of the time,
 And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,
 Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
 Exceeded by the height of happier men.
 O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
 "Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age,
 A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
 To march in ranks of better equipage:
 But since he died, and poets better prove,
 Theirs for their style I 'll read, his for his love."

82

I grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore mayst without attain't o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.
Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
Finding thy worth a limit past my praise;
And therefore art enforced to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days,
And do so, love; yet when they have devised
What strained touches rhetoric can lend,
Thou truly fair wert truly sympathised
In true plain words by thy true-telling friend;
 And their gross painting might be better used
 Where cheeks need blood; in thee it is abused.

83

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your fair no painting set;
I found, or thought I found, you did exceed
The barren tender of a poet's debt:
And therefore have I slept in your report,
That you yourself, being extant, well might show
How far a modern quill doth come too short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This silence for my sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory, being dumb;
For I impair not beauty being mute,
When others would give life and bring a tomb
 There lives more life in one of your fair eyes
 Than both your poets can in praise devise.

21

So is it not with me as with that Muse
Stirr'd by a painted beauty to his verse,
Who heaven itself for ornament doth use
And every fair with his fair doth rehearse,
Making a couplement of proud compare,
With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich gems,
With April's first-born flowers, and all things rare
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.
O, let me, true in love, but truly write,
And then believe me, my love is as fair
As any mother's child, though not so bright
As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air:
 Let them say more that like of hearsay well;
 I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

78

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse
And found such fair assistance in my verse
As every alien pen hath got my use
And under thee their poesy disperse.
Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine and born of thee:
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
And arts with thy sweet graces graced be;
 But thou art all my art, and dost advance
 As high as learning my rude ignorance.

79

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace;
But now my gracious numbers are decay'd,
And my sick Muse doth give another place.
I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen;
Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent
He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.
He lends thee virtue, and he stole that word
For thy behaviour; beauty doth he give,
And found it in thy cheek: he can afford
No praise to thee but what in thee doth live.

Then thank him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee thou thyself dost pay.

84

Who is it that says most? which can say more
Than this rich praise, that you alone are you?
In whose confine immured is the store
Which should example where your equal grew.
Lean penury within that pen doth dwell
That to his subject lends not some small glory;
But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so dignifies his story.
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear,
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
Making his style admired every where.

You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
Being fond on praise, which makes your praises
worse.

85

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
 While comments of your praise, richly compiled,
 Reserve their character with golden quill,
 And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
 I think good thoughts, whilst others write good words,
 And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry "Amen"
 To every hymn that able spirit affords,
 In polish'd form of well refined pen.
 Hearing you praised, I say "'T is so, 't is true,"
 And to the most of praise add something more;
 But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
 Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.
 Then others for the breath of words respect,
 Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect.

81

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
 Or you survive when I in earth am rotten;
 From hence your memory death cannot take,
 Although in me each part will be forgotten.
 Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
 Though I, once gone, to all the world must die:
 The earth can yield me but a common grave,
 When you entomb'd in men's eyes shall lie.
 Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
 Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read;
 And tongues to be your being shall rehearse,
 When all the breathers of this world are dead;
 You still shall live—such virtue hath my pen—
 Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths
 of men.

76

Why is my verse so barren of new pride,
So far from variation or quick change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, ever the same,
And keep invention in a notèd weed,
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth and where they did proceed?
O, know, sweet love, I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:
 For as the sun is daily new and old,
 So is my love still telling what is told.

80

O, how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-tied, speaking of your fame!
But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
My saucy bark, inferior far to his,
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride;
Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat,
He of tall building and of goodly pride:
 Then if he thrive and I be cast away,
 The worst was this; my love was my decay.

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
 Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
 That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
 Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?
 Was it his spirit, by spirits taught to write
 Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
 No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
 Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
 He, nor that affable familiar ghost
 Which nightly gulls him with intelligence,
 As victors, of my silence cannot boast;
 I was not sick of any fear from thence:
 But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
 Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled mine.

Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear,
 Thy dial how thy precious minutes waste;
 The vacant leaves thy mind's imprint will bear,
 And of this book this learning mayst thou taste.
 The wrinkles which thy glass will truly show
 Of mouthed graves will give thee memory;
 Thou by thy dial's shady stealth mayst know
 Time's thievish progress to eternity.
 Look, what thy memory cannot contain
 Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find
 Those children nursed, deliver'd from thy brain
 To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.
 These offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
 Shall profit thee and much enrich thy book.

Group 4

Absence and Insomnia

113

Since I left you mine eye is in my mind,
 And that which governs me to go about
 Doth part his function and is partly blind,
 Seems seeing, but effectually is out;
 For it no form delivers to the heart
 Of bird, of flower, or shape, which it doth latch:
 Of his quick object hath the mind no part,
 Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch;
 For if it see the rudest or gentlest sight,
 The most sweet favour or deformed'st creature,
 The mountain or the sea, the day or night,
 The crow or dove, it shapes them to your feature:
 Incapable of more, replete with you,
 My most true mind thus maketh mine untrue.

43

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
 For all the day they view things unrespected;
 But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
 And, darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
 Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright,
 How would thy shadow's form form happy show
 To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
 When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so!
 How would, I say, mine eyes be blessed made
 By looking on thee in the living day,
 When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
 Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay!
 All days are nights to see till I see thee,
 And nights bright days when dreams do show
 thee me.

44

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Injurious distance should not stop my way;
For then, despite of space, I would be brought,
From limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
No matter then although my foot did stand
Upon the farthest earth removed from thee;
For nimble thought can jump both sea and land,
As soon as think the place where he would be.
But, ah, thought kills me, that I am not thought,
To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that, so much of earth and water wrought,
I must attend time's leisure with my moan;
 Receiving nought by elements so slow
 But heavy tears, badges of either's woe.

45

The other two, slight air and purging fire,
Are both with thee, wherever I abide;
The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present-absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love to thee,
My life, being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to death, oppress'd with melancholy;
Until life's composition be recured
By those swift messengers return'd from thee,
Who even but now come back again, assured
Of thy fair health, recounting it to me:
 This told, I joy; but then no longer glad,
 I send them back again, and straight grow sad.

24

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd
Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;
My body is the frame wherein 't is held,
And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies;
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
 Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
 They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

46

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,
How to divide the conquest of thy sight;
Mine eye my heart thy picture's sight would bar,
My heart mine eye the freedom of that right.
My heart doth plead that thou in him dost lie,
A closet never pierced with crystal eyes,
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.
To 'cide this title is impannelled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart;
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety and the dear heart's part:
 As thus; mine eye's due is thine outward part,
 And my heart's right thine inward love of heart.

47

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took,
And each doth good turns now unto the other:
When that mine eye is famish'd for a look,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother,
With my love's picture then my eye doth feast
And to the painted banquet bids my heart;
Another time mine eye is my heart's guest
And in his thoughts of love doth share a part:
So, either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself away art present still with me;
For thou not farther than my thoughts canst move,
And I am still with them and they with thee;
Or, if they sleep, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart to heart's and eye's delight.

50 |

How heavy do I journey on the way,
When what I seek, my weary travel's end,
Doth teach that ease and that repose to say,
"Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend!"
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed, being made from thee:
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide;
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side;
For that same groan doth put this in my mind;
My grief lies onward, and my joy behind.

51

Thus can my love excuse the slow offence
Of my dull bearer when from thee I speed:
From where thou art why should I haste me thence?
Till I return, of posting is no need.
O, what excuse will my poor beast then find,
When swift extremity can seem but slow?
Then should I spur, though mounted on the wind,
In winged speed no motion shall I know:
Then can no horse with my desire keep pace;
Therefore desire, of perfect'st love being made,
Shall neigh—no dull flesh—in his fiery race;
But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade;
 Since from thee going he went wilful-slow,
 Towards thee I 'll run and give him leave to go.

27

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work 's expired:
For then my thoughts, from far where I abide,
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see:
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.
 Lo, thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
 For thee and for myself no quiet find.

How can I then return in happy plight,
 That am debarr'd the benefit of rest?
 When day's oppression is not eased by night,
 But day by night, and night by day, oppress'd?
 And each, though enemies to either's reign,
 Do in consent shake hands to torture me;
 The one by toil, the other to complain
 How far I toil, still farther off from thee.
 I tell the day, to please him thou art bright,
 And dost him grace when clouds do blot the heaven:
 So flatter I the swart-complexion'd night;
 When sparkling stars twire not thou gild'st the even.
 { But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer,
 And night doth nightly make grief's strength
 seem stronger.

✓ Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
 As, to behold desert a beggar born,
 And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
 And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
 And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
 And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
 And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
 And strength by limping sway disabled,
 And art made tongue-tied by authority,
 And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
 And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
 And captive good attending captain ill:
 Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
 Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

61

Is it thy will thy image should keep open
My heavy eyelids to the weary night?
Dost thou desire my slumbers should be broken,
While shadows like to thee do mock my sight?
Is it thy spirit that thou send'st from thee
So far from home into my deeds to pry,
To find out shames and idle hours in me,
The scope and tenour of thy jealousy?
O, no! thy love, though much, is not so great:
It is my love that keeps mine eye awake;
Mine own true love that doth my rest defeat,
To play the watchman ever for thy sake:
 For thee watch I whilst thou doth wake elsewhere,
 From me far off, with others all too near.

97

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year:
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness every where!
And yet this time removed was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit;
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
 Or, if they sing, 't is with so dull a cheer
 That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

98

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,
Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose;
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
 Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
 As with your shadow I with these did play.

99

The forward violet thus did I chide:
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that
 smells,
If not from my love's breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair;
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One blushing shame, another white despair;
A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both,
And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath;
But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth
A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
 More flowers I noted, yet I none could see
 But sweet or colour it had stol'n from thee.

Group 5

Disappointment—Slander—Farewell

56

Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said
 Thy edge should blunter be than appetite,
 Which but to-day by feeding is allay'd,
 To-morrow sharpen'd in his former might:
 So, love, be thou; although to-day thou fill
 Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with fulness,
 To-morrow see again, and do not kill
 The spirit of love with a perpetual dulness.
 Let this sad interim like the ocean be
 Which parts the shore, where two contracted new
 Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
 Return of love, more blest may be the view;
 Or call it winter, which, being full of care,
 Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd,
 more rare.

118

Like as, to make our appetites more keen,
 With eager compounds we our palate urge;
 As, to prevent our maladies unseen,
 We sicken to shun sickness when we purge;
 Even so, being full of your ne'er-cloying sweetness,
 To bitter sauces did I frame my feeding;
 And sick of welfare found a kind of meetness
 To be diseased, ere that there was true needing.
 Thus policy in love, to anticipate
 The ills that were not, grew to faults assured,
 And brought to medicine a healthful state,
 Which, rank of goodness, would by ill be cured:
 But thence I learn, and find the lesson true,
 Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

119

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears,
 Distill'd from limbecks fowl as hell within,
 Applying fears to hopes and hopes to fears,
 Still losing when I saw myself to win!
 What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
 Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!
 How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted,
 In the distraction of this madding fever!
 O benefit of ill! now I find true
 That better is by evil still made better;
 And ruin'd love, when it is built anew,
 Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.
 So I return rebuked to my content,
 And gain by ill thrice more than I have spent.

114

Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
 Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery?
 Or whether shall I say, mine eye saith true,
 And that your love taught it this alchemy,
 To make of monsters and things indigest
 Such cherubins as your sweet self resemble,
 Creating every bad a perfect best,
 As fast as objects to his beams assemble?
 O, 't is the first; 't is flattery in my seeing,
 And my great mind most kingly drinks it up:
 Mine eye well knows what with his gust is 'greeing,
 And to his palate doth prepare the cup:
 If it be poison'd, 'tis the lesser sin
 That mine eye loves it and doth first begin.

57

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend,
Nor services to do, till you require.
Nor dare I chide the world-without-end hour
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
Save, where you are how happy you make those.
 So true a fool is love that in your will,
 Though you do any thing, he thinks no ill.

58

That god forbid that made me first your slave,
I should in thought control your times of pleasure,
Or at your hand the account of hours to crave,
Being your vassal, bound to stay your leisure!
O, let me suffer, being at your beck,
The imprison'd absence of your liberty;
And patience, tame to sufferance, bide each check,
Without accusing you of injury.
Be where you list, your charter is so strong
That you yourself may privilege your time
To what you will; to you it doth belong
Yourself to pardon of self-doing crime.
 I am to wait, though waiting so be hell,
 Not blame your pleasure, be it ill or well.

Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view
 Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend;
 All tongues, the voice of souls, give thee that due,
 Uttering bare truth, even so as foes commend.
 Thy outward thus with outward praise is crown'd;
 But those same tongues, that give thee so thine own,
 In other accents do this praise confound
 By seeing farther than the eye hath shown.
 They look into the beauty of thy mind,
 And that, in guess, they measure by thy deeds;
 Then, churls, their thoughts, although their eyes were
 kind,
 To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds:
 But why thy odour matcheth not thy show,
 The soil is this, that thou dost common grow.

That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect,
 For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;
 The ornament of beauty is suspect,
 A crow that flies in heaven's sweetest air.
 So thou be good, slander doth but approve
 Thy worth the greater, being woo'd of time;
 For canker vice the sweetest buds doth love,
 And thou present'st a pure unstained prime.
 Thou hast pass'd by the ambush of young days,
 Either not assail'd, or victor being charged;
 Yet this thy praise cannot be so thy praise,
 To tie up envy evermore enlarged:
 If some suspect of ill mask'd not thy show,
 Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts shouldst woe.

95

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame
Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name!
O, in what sweets dost thou thy sins inclose!
That tongue that tells the story of thy days,
Making lascivious comments on thy sport,
Cannot dispraise but in a kind of praise;
Naming thy name blesses an ill report.
O, what a mansion have those vices got
Which for their habitation chose out thee,
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot
And all things turn to fair that eyes can see!
 Take heed, dear heart, of this large privilege;
 The hardest knife ill used doth lose his edge.

96

Some say, thy fault is youth, some wantonness;
Some say, thy grace is youth and gentle sport;
Both grace and faults are loved of more and less:
Thou makest faults graces that to thee resort.
As on the finger of a throned queen
The basest jewel will be well esteem'd,
So are those errors that in thee are seen
To truths translated and for true things deem'd.
How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
If like a lamb he could his looks translate!
How many gazers mightst thou lead away,
If thou wouldst use the strength of all thy state!
 But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
 As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

94

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
 That do not do the thing they most do show,
 Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
 Unmoved, cold and to temptation slow;
 They rightly do inherit heaven's graces
 And husband nature's riches from expense;
 They are the lords and owners of their faces,
 Others but stewards of their excellence.
 The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
 Though to itself it only live and die,
 But if that flower with base infection meet,
 The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
 For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
 Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

67

Ah, wherefore with infection should he live
 And with his presence grace impiety,
 That sin by him advantage should achieve
 And lace itself with his society?
 Why should false painting imitate his cheek,
 And steal dead seeming of his living hue?
 Why should poor beauty indirectly seek
 Roses of shadow, since his rose is true?
 Why should he live, now Nature bankrupt is,
 Beggar'd of blood to blush through lively veins?
 For she hath no exchequer now but his,
 And, proud of many, lives upon his gains.
 O, him she stores, to show what wealth she had
 In days long since, before these last so bad.

117

Accuse me thus: that I have scanted all
 Wherein I should your great deserts repay.
 Forgot upon your dearest love to call,
 Where to all bonds do tie me day by day;
 That I have frequent been with unknown minds,
 And given to time your own dear-purchased right;
 That I have hoisted sail to all the winds
 Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
 Book both my wilfulness and errors down,
 And on just proof surmise accumulate;
 Bring me within the level of your frown,
 But shoot not at me in your waken'd hate;
 Since my appeal says I did strive to prove
 The constancy and virtue of your love.

110



Alas, 'tis true I have gone here and there,
 And made myself a motley to the view,
 Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most
 dear,
 Made old offences of affections new;
 Most true it is that I have look'd on truth
 Askance and strangely: but, by all above,
 These blenches gave my heart another youth,
 And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
 Now all is done, have what shall have no end:
 Mine appetite I never more will grind
 On newer proof, to try an older friend,
 A god in love, to whom I am confined.
 Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
 Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.

III

O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
 The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
 That did not better for my life provide
 Than public means which public manners breeds.
 Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
 And almost thence my nature is subdued
 To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
 Pity me then and wish I were renew'd;
 Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink
 Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection;
 No bitterness that I will bitter think,
 Nor double penance, to correct correction.

Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye
 Even that your pity is enough to cure me.

II2

Your love and pity doth the impression fill
 Which vulgar scandal stamp'd upon my brow;
 For what care I who calls me well or ill,
 So you o'er-green my bad, my good allow?
 You are my all the world, and I must strive
 To know my shames and praises from your tongue;
 None else to me, nor I to none alive,
 That my steel'd sense or changes right or wrong.
 In so profound abysm I throw all care
 Of others' voices, that my adder's sense
 To critic and to flatterer stopped are.
 Mark how with my neglect I do dispense:

You are so strongly in my purpose bred
 That all the world besides methinks are dead.

121

'T is better to be vile than vile esteemed,
 When not to be receives reproach of being;
 And the just pleasure lost, which is so deemed
 Not by our feeling, but by others' seeing:
 For why should others' false adulterate eyes
 Give salutation to my sportive blood?
 Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
 Which in their wills count bad what I think good?
 No, I am that I am, and they that level
 At my abuses reckon up their own:
 I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel;
 By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown;
 Unless this general evil they maintain,
 All men are bad and in their badness reign.

33

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
 Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
 Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
 Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
 Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
 With ugly rack on his celestial face,
 And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
 Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
Even so my sun one early morn did shine
 With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
 But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
 The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.
 Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
 Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun
 staineth.

34

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
 And make me travel forth without my cloak,
 To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,
 Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke?
 'Tis not enough that through the cloud thou break,
 To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,
 For no man well of such a salve can speak
 That heals the wound and cures not the disgrace:
 Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief;
 Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss:
 The offender's sorrow lends but weak relief
 To him that bears the strong offence's cross.

Ah, but those tears are pearl which thy love sheds,
 And they are rich and ransom all ill deeds.

35

No more be grieved at that which thou hast done:
 Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud;
 Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun,
 And loathsome canker lives in sweetest bud.
 All men make faults, and even I in this,
 Authorizing thy trespass with compare,
 Myself corrupting, salving thy amiss,
Excusing thy sins more than thy sins are;
For to thy sensual fault I bring in sense—
Thy adverse party is thy advocate—
 And 'gainst myself a lawful plea commence:
 Such civil war is in my love and hate,
 That I an accessory needs must be
 To that sweet thief which sourly robs from me.

36

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remain,
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
Which though it alter not love's sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame,
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,
Unless thou take that honour from thy name:
 But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
 As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

40

Take all my loves, my love, yea, take them all;
What hast thou then more than thou hadst before?
No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call;
All mine was thine before thou hadst this more.
Then, if for my love thou my love receivest,
I cannot blame thee for my love thou usest;
But yet be blamed, if thou thyself deceivest
By wilful taste of what thyself refuseth.
I do forgive thy robbery, gentle thief,
Although thou steal thee all my poverty:
And yet, love knows, it is a greater grief
To bear love's wrong than hate's known injury.
 Lascivious grace, in whom all ill well shows,
 Kill me with spites; yet we must not be foes.

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:
The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mistaking;
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgement making.

Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

SERIES II
TO THE DARK LADY
Group I
Remedy for Sorrow in Love

154

The little Love-god lying once asleep
Laid by his side his heart-inflaming brand,
Whilst many nymphs that vow'd chaste life to keep
Came tripping by; but in her maiden hand
The fairest votary took up that fire
Which many legions of true hearts had warm'd;
And so the general of hot desire
Was sleeping by a virgin hand disarm'd.
This brand she quenched in a cool well by,
Which from Love's fire took heat perpetual,
Growing a bath and healthful remedy
For men diseased; but I, my mistress' thrall,
Came there for cure, and this by that I prove.
Love's fire heats water, water cools not love.

153

Cupid laid by his brand and fell asleep:
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground;
Which borrow'd from this holy fire of Love
A dateless lively heat, still to endure,
And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure.
But at my mistress' eye Love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast;
I, sick withal, the help of bath desired,
And thither hied, a sad distemper'd guest,
But found no cure: the bath for my help lies
Where Cupid got new fire, my mistress' eyes.

181

Group 2

Praise of Brunette Beauty—Badinage

132

Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me,
 Knowing thy heart torments me with disdain,
 Have put on black and loving mourners be,
 Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
 And truly not the morning sun of heaven
 Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east,
 Nor that full star that ushers in the even
 Doth half that glory to the sober west,
 As those two mourning eyes become thy face:
 O, let it then as well beseem thy heart
 To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace,
 And suit thy pity like in every part.

Then will I swear beauty herself is black,
 And all they foul that thy complexion lack.

127

In the old age black was not counted fair,
 Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;
But now is black beauty's successive heir,
 And beauty slander'd with a bastard shame:
 For since each hand hath put on nature's power,
 Fairing the foul with art's false borrow'd face,
 Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,
 But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
 Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem
 At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
 Slandering creation with a false esteem:
 Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
 That every tongue says beauty should look so.

130

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red:
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.
I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound:
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
 As any she belied with false compare.

128

How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st,
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,
Whilst my poor lips, which should that harvest reap,
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand
To be so tickled, they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips,
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,
Making dead wood more blest than living lips.
 Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
 Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

135

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy "Will,"
 And "Will" to boot, and "Will" in overplus;
 More than enough am I that vex thee still,
 To thy sweet will making addition thus.
 Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
 Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
 Shall will in others seem right gracious,
 And in my will no fair acceptance shine?
 The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,
 And in abundance addeth to his store;
 So thou, being rich in "Will," add to thy "Will"
 One will of mine, to make thy large "Will" more.
 Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;
 Think all but one, and me in that one "Will."

136

If thy soul check thee that I come so near,
 Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy "Will,"
 And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;
 Thus far for love, my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.
 "Will" will fulfil the treasure of thy love,
 Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one.
 In things of great receipt with ease we prove
 Among a number one is reckon'd none:
 Then in the number let me pass untold,
 Though in thy store's account I one must be;
 For nothing hold me, so it please thee hold
 That nothing me, a something sweet to thee:
 Make but my name thy love, and love that still,
 And then thou lovest me, for my name is "Will."

145 ¹

Those lips that Love's own hand did make
Breathed forth the sound that said "I hate,"
To me that languish'd for her sake:
But when she saw my woeful state,
Straight in her heart did mercy come,
Chiding that tongue that ever sweet
Was used in giving gentle doom;
And taught it thus anew to greet;
"I hate" she alter'd with an end,
That follow'd it as gentle day
Doth follow night, who, like a fiend,
From heaven to hell is flown away;
 "I hate" from hate away she threw,
 And saved my life, saying "not you."

142

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving:
O, but with mine compare thou thine own state,
And thou shalt find it merits not reproving;
Or, if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That have profaned their scarlet ornaments
And seal'd false bonds of love as oft as mine,
Robb'd others' beds' revenues of their rents.
Be it lawful I love thee, as thou lovest those
Whom thine eyes woo as mine importune thee:
Root pity in thy heart, that, when it grows,
Thy pity may deserve to pitied be.

 If thou dost seek to have what thou dost hide,
 By self-example mayst thou be denied!

¹ This sonnet is not considered to be of Shakespearian authorship by the best critics.

Group 3

Reproach for Cruelty and Unfaithfulness

139

O call not me to justify the wrong
 That thy unkindness lays upon my heart;
 Wound me not with thine eye, but with thy tongue;
 Use power with power, and slay me not by art.
 Tell me thou lovest elsewhere; but in my sight,
 Dear heart, forbear to glance thine eye aside:
 What need'st thou wound with cunning, when thy
 might

Is more than my o'er-pressed defence can bide?
 Let me excuse thee: ah, my love well knows
 Her pretty looks have been mine enemies;
 And therefore from my face she turns my foes,
 That they elsewhere might dart their injuries:
 Yet do not so; but since I am near slain,
 Kill me outright with looks, and rid my pain.

131

Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
 As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;
 For well thou know'st to my dear doting heart
 Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel.
 Yet, in good faith, some say that thee behold,
 Thy face hath not the power to make love groan:
 To say they err I dare not be so bold,
 Although I swear it to myself alone.
 And to be sure that is not false I swear,
 A thousand groans, but thinking on thy face,
 One on another's neck, do witness bear
 Thy black is fairest in my judgement's place.
 In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds,
 And thence this slander, as I think, proceeds.

137

Thou blind fool, Love, what dost thou to mine eyes,
That they behold, and see not what they see?
They know what beauty is, see where it lies,
Yet what the best is take the worst to be.
If eyes, corrupt by over-partial looks,
Be anchor'd in the bay where all men ride,
Why of eyes' falsehood hast thou forged hooks,
Whereto the judgement of my heart is tied?
Why should my heart think that a several plot
Which my heart knows the wide world's common
place?

Or mine eyes seeing this, say this is not,
To put fair truth upon so foul a face?

In things right true my heart and eyes have erred,
And to this false plague are they now transferred.

147

My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease;
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
The uncertain sickly appetite to please.
My reason, the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve
Desire is death, which physic did except.
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest;
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,
At random from the truth vainly express'd;
For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee
bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

148

O, me, what eyes hath Love put in my head,
 Which have no correspondence with true sight!
 Or, if they have, where is my judgement fled,
 That censures falsely what they see aright?
 If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
 What means the world to say it is not so?
 If it be not, then love doth well denote
 Love's eye is not so true as all men's: no,
 How can it? O, how can Love's eye be true,
 That is so vex'd with watching and with tears?
 No marvel then, though I mistake my view;
 The sun itself sees not till heaven clears.

O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me
 blind,
 Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find.

149

Canst thou, O cruel! say I love thee not,
 When I against myself with thee partake?
 Do I not think on thee, when I forgot
 Am of myself, all tyrant, for thy sake?
 Who hateth thee that I do call my friend?
 On whom frown'st thou that I do fawn upon?
 Nay, if thou lour'st on me, do I not spend
 Revenge upon myself with present moan?
 What merit do I in myself respect,
 That is so proud thy service to despise,
 When all my best doth worship thy defect,
 Commanded by the motion of thine eyes?

But, love, hate on, for now I know thy mind;
 Those that can see thou lovest, and I am blind.

140

Be wise as thou art cruel; do not press
My tongue-tied patience with too much disdain;
Lest sorrow lend me words, and words express
The manner of my pity-wanting pain.
If I might teach thee wit, better it were,
Though not to love, yet, love, to tell me so;
As testy sick men, when their deaths be near,
No news but health from their physicians know;
For, if I should despair, I should grow mad,
And in my madness might speak ill of thee:
Now this ill-wresting world is grown so bad,
Mad slanderers by mad ears believed be.

That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
Bear thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart
go wide.

141

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thousand errors note;
But 't is my heart that loves what they despise,
Who, in despite of view, is pleased to dote;
Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune delighted;
Nor tender feeling, to base touches prone,
Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited
To any sensual feast with thee alone:
But my five wits nor my five senses can
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee,
Who leaves unsway'd the likeness of a man,
Thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be:
Only my plague thus far I count my gain,
That she that makes me sin awards me pain.

Group 4

Rivalry with Friend

143

Lo, as a careful housewife runs to catch
 One of her feather'd creatures broke away,
 Sets down her babe, and makes all swift dispatch
 In pursuit of the thing she would have stay;
 Whilst her neglected child holds her in chase,
 Cries to catch her whose busy care is bent
 To follow that which flies before her face,
 Not prizing her poor infant's discontent:
 So runn'st thou after that which flies from thee,
 Whilst I thy babe chase thee afar behind;
 But if thou catch thy hope, turn back to me,
 And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind:
 So will I pray that thou mayst have thy "Will,"
 If thou turn back and my loud crying still.

144

✓ Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
 Which like two spirits do suggest me still:
 The better angel is a man right fair,
 The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
 To win me soon to hell, my female evil
 Tempteth my better angel ~~from my side,~~
 And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
 Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
 And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend
 Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;
 But being both from me, both to each friend,
 I guess one angel in another's hell:
 Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
 Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

41

(To the Youth)

Those pretty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am sometime absent from thy heart,
Thy beauty and thy years full well befits,
For still temptation follows where thou art.
Gentle thou art, and therefore to be won,
Beauteous thou art, therefore to be assailed;
And when a woman woos, what woman's son
Will sourly leave her till she have prevailed?
Ay me! but yet thou mightst my seat forbear,
And chide thy beauty and thy straying youth,
Who lead thee in their riot even there
Where thou art forced to break a twofold truth,
 Hers, by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
 Thine, by thy beauty being false to me.

42

(To the Youth)

That thou hast her, it is not all my grief,
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly;
That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief,
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.
Loving offenders, thus I will excuse ye:
Thou dost love her, because thou know'st I love her;
And for my sake even so doth she abuse me,
Suffering my friend for my sake to approve her.
If I lose thee, my loss is my love's gain,
And losing her, my friend hath found that loss;
Both find each other, and I lose both twain,
And both for my sake lay on me this cross:
 But here 's the joy: my friend and I are one;
 Sweet flattery! then she loves but me alone.

133

(To the Lady)

Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groan
 For that deep wound it gives my friend and me!
 Is 't not enough to torture me alone,
 But slave to slavery my sweet'st friend must be?
 Me from myself thy cruel eye hath taken,
 And my next self thou harder hast engrossed:
 Of him, myself, and thee, I am forsaken;
 A torment thrice threefold thus to be crossed.
 Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward,
 But then my friend's heart let my poor heart bail;
 Whoe'er keeps me, let my heart be his guard;
 Thou canst not then use rigour in my gaol:
 And yet thou wilt; for I, being pent in thee,
 Perforce am thine, and all that is in me.

134

(To the Lady)

So, now I have confess'd that he is thine
 And I myself am mortgaged to thy will,
 Myself I 'll forfeit, so that other mine
 Thou wilt restore, to be my comfort still:
 But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
 For thou art covetous and he is kind;
 He learn'd but surety-like to write for me,
 Under that bond that him as fast doth bind.
 The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
 Thou usurer, that put'st forth all to use,
 And sue a friend came debtor for my sake;
 So him I lose through my unkind abuse.
 Him have I lost; thou hast both him and me:
 He pays the whole, and yet am I not free.

Group 5

*Love's Blindness*138¹

✓ When my love swears that she is made of truth,
 I do believe her, though I know she lies,
 That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
 Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
 Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
 Although she knows my days are past the best,
 Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:
 On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
 But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
 And wherefore say not I that I am old?
 O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
 And age in love loves not to have years told:
 Therefore I lie with her and she with me,
 And in our faults by lies we flatter'd be.

¹ This sonnet appeared as the first poem of *The Passionate Pilgrim* (published in 1599, when Shakespeare was in his thirty-fifth year) in the following form:

"When my love swears that she is made of truth,
 I do believe her, though I know she lies,
 That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unskilful in the world's false forgeries.
 Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
 Although *I know* my years be past the best,
I smiling credit her false-speaking tongue,
Outfacing faults in love with love's ill rest.
 But wherefore says *my love* that she is young?
 And wherefore say not I that I am old?
 O, love's best habit is *a soothing tongue*,
 And age, in love, loves not to have years told,
 Therefore *I 'll* lie with *love*, and *love* with me,
 Since that our faults *in love* thus smother'd be."

150

O, from what power hast thou this powerful might
 With insufficiency my heart to sway?
 To make me give the lie to my true sight,
 And swear that brightness doth not grace the day?
 Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
 That in the very refuse of thy deeds
 There is such strength and warrantise of skill,
 That, in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds?
 Who taught thee how to make me love thee more,
 The more I hear and see just cause of hate?
 O, though I love what others do abhor,
 With others thou shouldst not abhor my state:
 If thy unworthiness raised love in me,
 More worthy I to be beloved of thee.

151

Love is too young to know what conscience is;
 Yet who knows not conscience is born of love?
 Then, gentle cheater, urge not my amiss,
 Lest guilty of my faults thy sweet self prove:
 For, thou betraying me, I do betray
 My nobler part to my gross body's treason;
 My soul doth tell my body that he may
 Triumph in love; flesh stays no farther reason,
 But rising at thy name doth point out thee
 As his triumphant prize. Proud of this pride,
 He is contented thy poor drudge to be,
 To stand in thy affairs, fall by thy side.
 No want of conscience hold it that I call
 Her "love" for whose dear love I rise and fall.

152

✓ In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn,
But thou art twice forsworn, to me love swearing;
In act thy bed-vow broke, and new faith torn,
In vowing new hate after new love bearing.
But why of two oaths' breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty! I am perjured most;
For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee,
And all my honest faith in thee is lost:
For I have sworn deep oaths of thy deep kindness,
Oaths of thy love, thy truth, thy constancy;
And, to enlighten thee, gave eyes to blindness,
Or made them swear against the thing they see;
For I have sworn thee fair; more perjured I,
To swear against the truth so foul a lie!

Group 6

Profane Love—Salvation

129

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
 Is lust in action; and till action, lust
 Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
 Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
 Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight;
 Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,
 Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,
 On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
 Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
 Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme;
 A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
 Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream.

All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
 To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

146

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
 Pressed by these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
 Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
 Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
 Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
 Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
 And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
 Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
 Within be fed, without be rich no more:

So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
 And Death once dead, there 's no more dying then.

SERIES III

TO SOUTHAMPTON

Group I

*Apologia—Renewal of Friendship—Fame's Conquest
over Time*

120

That you were once unkind befriends me now,
And for that sorrow which I then did feel
Needs must I under my transgression bow,
Unless my nerves were brass or hammer'd steel.
For if you were by my unkindness shaken,
As I by yours, you 've pass 'd a hell of time;
And I, a tyrant, have no leisure taken
To weigh how once I suffer'd in your crime.
O, that our night of woe might have remember'd
My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow hits,
And soon to you, as you to me, then tender'd
The humble salve which wounded bosoms fits!
 But that your trespass now becomes a fee;
 Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

100

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long
To speak of that which gives thee all thy might?
Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,
Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?
Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem
In gentle numbers time so idly spent;
Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem
And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
Rise, resty Muse, my love's sweet face survey,
If Time have any wrinkle graven there;
If any, be a satire to decay,
And make Time's spoils despised every where.
 Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life;
 So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.

197

101

O truant Muse, what shall be thy amends
 For thy neglect of truth in beauty dyed?
 Both truth and beauty on my love depends;
 So dost thou too, and therein dignified.
 Make answer, Muse: wilt thou not haply say,
 "Truth needs no colour, with his colour fix'd;
 Beauty no pencil, beauty's truth to lay;
 But best is best, if never intermix'd"?
 Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb?
 Excuse not silence so, for 't lies in thee
 To make him much outlive a gilded tomb
 And to be praised of ages yet to be.

Then do thy office, Muse; I teach thee how
 To make him seem long hence as he shows now.

102

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in
 seeming;
 I love not less, though less the show appear:
 That love is merchandised whose rich esteeming
 The owner's tongue doth publish every where.
 Our love was new, and then but in the spring,
 When I was wont to greet it with my lays;
 As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,
 And stops her pipe in growth of riper days:
 Not that the summer is less pleasant now
 Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night,
 But that wild music burthens every bough,
 And sweets grown common lose their dear delight.
 Therefore, like her, I sometime hold my tongue,
 Because I would not dull you with my song.

63

Against my love shall be, as I am now,
 With Time's injurious hand crush'd and o'erworn;
 When hours have drain'd his blood and fill'd his brow
 With lines and wrinkles; when his youthful morn
 Hath travell'd on to age's steepy night,
 And all those beauties whereof now he's king
 Are vanishing or vanish'd out of sight,
 Stealing away the treasure of his spring;
 For such a time do I now fortify
 Against confounding age's cruel knife,
 That he shall never cut from memory
 My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life:
 His beauty shall in these black lines be seen,
 And they shall live, and he in them still green.

64

- ✓ 1 When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
 2 The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age;
 3 When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,
 4 And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
 5 When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
 6 Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
 7 And the firm soil win of the watery main,
 8 Increasing store with loss and loss with store;
 9 When I have seen such interchange of state,
 10 Or state itself confounded to decay;
 11 Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminare,
 12 That Time will come and take my love away.
 13 This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
 14 But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

65

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
 But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,
 How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea
 Whose action is no stronger than a flower?

O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
 Against the wreckful siege of battering days,
 When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
 Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
 O fearful meditation! where, alack,
 Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid?
 Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
 Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?

O, none, unless this miracle have might,
 That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

55

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
 Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
 But you shall shine more bright in these contents
 Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
 When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
 And broils root out the work of masonry,
 Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
 The living record of your memory.
 'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
 Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room
 Even in the eyes of all posterity
 That wear this world out to the ending doom.

So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
 You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

✓ Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
 So do our minutes hasten to their end;
 Each changing place with that which goes before,
 In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
 Nativity, once in the main of light,
 Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
 Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
 And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
 Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
 And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,
 Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,
 And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow:
And yet to times in hope my verse shall stand,
Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

115

Those lines that I before have writ do lie,
 Even those that said I could not love you dearer:
 Yet then my judgement knew no reason why
 My most full flame should afterwards burn clearer.
 But reckoning Time, whose million'd accidents
 Creep in 'twixt vows, and change decrees of kings,
 Tan sacred beauty, blunt the sharp'st intents,
 Divert strong minds to the course of altering things;
 Alas, why, fearing of Time's tyranny,
 Might I not then say "Now I love you best,"
 When I was certain o'er uncertainty,
 Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
 Love is a babe; then might I not say so,
 To give full growth to that which still doth grow?

104

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
 For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred;
 Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

108

What 's in the brain, that ink may character,
Which hath not figured to thee my true spirit?
What 's new to speak, what new to register,
That may express my love, or thy dear merit?
Nothing, sweet boy; but yet, like prayers divine,
I must each day say o'er the very same;
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Even as when first I hallowed thy fair name.
So that eternal love in love's fresh case
Weighs not the dust and injury of age,
Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place,
But makes antiquity for aye his page;
 Finding the first conceit of love there bred,
 Where time and outward form would show it dead.

O, never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify.
As easy might I from myself depart
As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love: if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again;
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
 For nothing this wide universe I call,
 Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all.

Group 2

Epithalamium

116

✓ Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
 If this be error and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

Group 3

Political Allusions

124

If my dear love were but the child of state,
It might for Fortune's bastard be unfather'd,
As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.
No, it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the blow of thrall'd discontent,
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls:
It fears not policy, that heretic,
Which works on leases of short-number'd hours.
But all alone stands hugely politic,
That it nor grows with heat nor drowns with showers.
 To this I witness call the fools of time,
 Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime.

125

Were 't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honouring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or ruining?
Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent,
For compound sweet forgoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing spent?
No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free,
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows no art
But mutual render, only me for thee.
 Hence, thou suborn'd informer! a true soul
 When most impeach'd stands least in thy control.

Group 4

*The Poet's Apology for Giving Away his Copy of the
Sonnets—Celebration of Southampton's
Release from the Tower*

122

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain
Full character'd with lasting memory,
Which shall above that idle rank remain,
Beyond all date, even to eternity:
Or, at the least, so long as brain and heart
Have faculty by nature to subsist;
Till each to razed oblivion yield his part
Of thee, thy record never can be miss'd.
That poor retention could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy dear love to score;
Therefore to give them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receive thee more:
 To keep an adjunct to remember thee
 Were to import forgetfulness in me.

123

No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change:
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but dressings of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old;
And rather make them born to our desire
Than think that we before have heard them told,
Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past,
For thy records and what we see doth lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste.
 This I do vow, and this shall ever be,
 I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

107

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.
The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
Now with the drops of this most balmy time
My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes,
Since, spite of him, I 'll live in this poor rhyme,
While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
 And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
 When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

Appendices

APPENDIX I

ROWE'S LIFE OF SHAKESPEARE

(Reprinted)

Nicholas Rowe's edition of Shakespeare's plays, which was the first attempt to reprint after the Folios, was given to the public in 1709. Rowe was himself a dramatist and poet-laureate to Queen Anne. To him is due the arrangement of the plays into scenes and acts, followed ever since by editors, also the list of *dramatis personæ* before the plays. Nor is this all that modern criticism owes to Shakespeare's seventeenth century editor whom they have been careful not to reprint but from whom they have not scrupled to copy as original the really excellent estimate of Shakespeare's genius. I have given Rowe's Life in full. It is dedicated to the Duke of Somerset in a sort of farewell to the practice of original composition. In this epistle Rowe says:

Tho' it be high time to disclaim those Studies,
with which I have amused my self and other People;
yet I could not take leave of an Art I have long loved,
without commending the best of our Poets to the

Protection of the best Patron. I have sometimes had the Honour to hear Your Grace express the particular Pleasure you have taken in that Greatness of Thought, those natural Images, those Passions finely touched and that beautiful Expression which is every where to be met with in Shakespear. And that he may still have the Honour to entertain Your Grace, I have taken some Care to redeem him from the Injuries of Former Impressions. I must not pretend to have restored this Work to the Exactness of the Author's Original Manuscripts: Those are lost, or at least, are gone beyond any Inquiry I could make; so that there was nothing left, but to compare the several Editions, and give the true Reading as well as I could from thence. . . . Such as it is, it is the best Present of *English Poetry* I am capable of making Your Grace. And I believe I shall be thought no unjust Disposer of this the Author's Estate in Wit, by humbly Offering it where he would have been Proud to have Bequeth'd it. . . .

Your Grace's
 Most Obliged,
 Most Devoted and
 Obedient Humble Servant
 N. ROWE.

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE ETC. OF
 MR. WILLIAM SHAKSPEAR

It seems to be a kind of Respect due to the Memory of Excellent Men, especially of those whom their Wit



Nicholas Rowe
After the painting by Sir Godfrey Kneller

and Learning have made famous, to deliver some Account of themselves, as well as their Works, to Posterity. For this Reason, how fond do we see some People of discovering any little Personal Story of the Great Men of Antiquity, their Families, the common Accidents of their Lives, and even their Shape, Make and Features have been the Subject of critical Enquiries. How trifling soever this Curiosity may seem to be, it is certainly very Natural; and we are hardly satisfied with an Account of any remarkable Person, till we have heard him described even to the very Cloaths he wears. As for what relates to Men of Letters, the knowledge of an Author may sometimes conduce to the better understanding of his Book: And tho' the Works of Mr. *Shakespear* may seem to many not to want a Comment, yet I fancy some little Account of the Man himself, may not be thought improper to go along with them.

He was the Son of Mr. *John Shakespear*, and was Born at *Stratford* upon *Avon* in *Warwickshire*, in April 1564. His Family as appears by the Register and Public Writings relating to that Town, were of Good Figure and Fashion there and are mentioned as Gentlemen. His Father who was a considerable Dealer in Wool, had so large a Family, ten Children in all, that tho' he was his eldest Son, he could give him no better Education than his own Employment. He had bred him, 't is true, for some time at a Free-School Where 't is probable he acquir'd that little

Latin he was Master of: But the narrowness of his Circumstances, and the want of his assistance at Home, forc'd his Father to withdraw him from thence, and unhappily prevented his further Proficiency in that Language. It is without Controversy, that he had no knowledge of the Writings of the *Antient Poets*, not only from this Reason, but from his Works themselves, where we find no traces of any thing that looks like an Imitation of 'em; the Delicacy of his Taste and the natural Bent of his own Great *Genius*, equal, if not superior to some of the best of theirs, would certainly have led him to Read and Study 'em with so much Pleasure, that some of their fine Images would naturally have insinuated themselves into, and been mixed with his own writings; so that his not copying at least something from them may be an Argument of his never having read 'em. Whether his Ignorance of the *Ancients* were a disadvantage to him or no, may admit of a Dispute: For tho' the knowledge of 'em might have made him more Correct yet it is not improbable but that the Regularity and Deference for them which would have attended that Correctness, might have restrained some of that Fire, Impetuosity, and even beautiful Extravagance which we admire in Shakespear: And I believe we are better pleased with those Thoughts, altogether New and Uncommon, which his own Imagination supplied him so abundantly with, than if he had given us the most beautiful Passages out of the *Greek* and *Latin* Poets, and that

in the most agreeable manner that it was possible for a Master of the *English* Language to deliver 'em. Some *Latin*, without question he did know, and one may see up and down in his Plays how far his Reading that way went: In *Love's Labours Lost*, the Pedant comes out with a Vers of *Mantuan*; and in *Titus Andronicus*, one of the gothick Princes upon reading

Integer vitæ scelerisque purus
Non eget Mauri jaculis nec arcu—

says, '*T is a Verse in Horace, but he remembered it from his Latin Grammar; Which I suppose was the Authors Case. Whatever Latin he had, 't is certain he understood French, as may be observed from many words and Sentences scattered up and down his Plays in that Language, and especially from one scene in Henry the Fifth written wholly in it.*

Upon his leaving School, he seems to have given Entirely into that way of Living which his Father proposed to him; and in order to settle in the World after a Family manner, he thought fit to marry while he was yet very Young. His Wife was a Daughter of one *Hathaway*, said to have been a substantial Yeoman in the Neighbourhood of *Stratford*. In this kind of Settlement he continued for some time, 'till an Extravagance that he was guilty of, forced him both out of his country and that way of Living which he had taken up; and though it seemed at first to be a Blemish upon his good Manners, and a Misfortune to

him, yet it afterwards happily proved the occasion of exerting one of the greatest *Geniuses* that was known in *Dramatick Poetry*.

He had, by a Misfortune common enough to young Fellows, fallen into Ill Company; and amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of Deer-stealing, engaged him with them more than once in robbing a Park that belonged to Sir *Thomas Lucy* of *Cherlcot*, near *Stratford*. For this he was prosecuted by that Gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill-Usage, he made a Ballad upon him. And though this, probably the first Essay of his Poetry be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the Prosecution against him to that degree, that he was obliged to leave his Business and Family in Warwickshire, for some time, and shelter himself in *London*.

It is at this Time, and upon this Accident that he is said to have made his first Acquaintance in the Play-house. He was received into the Company then in being, at first in a very mean Rank; but his admirable Wit, and the natural Turn of it to the Stage, soon distinguished him, if not as an extraordinary Actor, Yet as an excellent Writer.

His Name is Printed, as the Custom was in those Times, amongst those of the other Players, before some old Plays, but without any particular Account of what sort of Parts he used to play; and tho' I have inquired I could never meet with any further Account of him

this way, than that the top of his Performance was the Ghost in his own *Hamlet*. I should have been much more pleas'd, to have learn'd from some certain Authority, which was the first Play he wrote; It would be without doubt a pleasure to any Man, curious in Things of this Kind, to see and know, what was the first Essay of a Fancy like *Shakespear's*. Perhaps we are not to look for his Beginnings, like those of other Authors, among their least perfect Writings; Art had so little, and Nature so large a Share in what he did, that, for aught I know, the Performances of his Youth, as they were the most vigorous, and had the most Fire and strength of Imagination in 'em, were the best. I would not be thought by this to mean, that his Fancy was so loose and extravagant as to be Independent on the Rule and Government of Judgment; but that what he thought was commonly so Great, so justly and rightly Conceived in itself, that it wanted little, or no Correction, and was immediately approved by an impartial Judgment at first sight.

Mr. Dryden seems to think that *Pericles* is one of his first Plays; but there is no judgment to be formed on that, since there is good Reason to believe that the greatest part of that Play was not written by him, tho' it is owned some part of it certainly was, particularly the last Act. But tho' the order of Time in which the several Pieces were written be generally uncertain, yet there are Passages in some few of them

which seem to fix their Dates. So the *chorus* in the beginning of the fifth Act of *Henry Fifth*, by a Compliment very handsom'ly turned to the Earl of *Essex*, shews the Play to have been written when that Lord was General for the Queen in Ireland: And his *Elegy* upon the Q. *Elizabeth* and her Successor K. *James*, in the latter end of his *Henry VIII*, is a proof of that Plays being written after the Accession of the latter of those two Princes to the Crown of *England*. Whatever the Particular Times of his Writing were, the People of his Age, who began to grow wonderfully fond of Diversions of this kind, could not but be highly pleased to see a *Genius* arise among 'em of so pleasurable, so rich a Vein, and so plentifully capable of furnishing their favorite Entertainments. Besides the Advantages of his Wit, he was in himself a good natur'd Man of great sweetness in his Manners, and a most agreeable Companion; so that it is no wonder if with so many good Qualities he made Himself acquainted with the best Conversations of those Times.

Queen *Elizabeth* had several of his Plays Acted before her, and without doubt gave him many gracious Marks of her Favour: It is that Maiden Princess plainly, whom he intends by

A fair Vestal, Throned by the West.

Midsummer Night's Dream.

And that whole Passage is a Compliment very properly brought in, and very handsomely applied to her. She

was so well pleased with that admirable Character of *Falstaff*, in the two Parts of *Henry the Fourth*, that she commanded him to continue it for one Play more and to shew him in Love. This is said to be the Occasion of his Writing *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. How well she was obeyed, the Play it self is an admirable Proof. Upon this Occasion, it may not be improper to observe that this Part of *Falstaff* is said to have been written originally under the Name of *Oldcastle* some of that Family being then remaining, and the Queen was pleased to command him to alter it; upon which he made use of *Falstaff*.

The present offence was indeed avoided; but I don't know whether the Author may not have been somewhat to blame in his Second Choice, since it is certain that *Sir John Falstaff*, who was a Knight of the Garter and a Lieutenant General was a Name of Distinguished Merit in the Wars in *France* in *Henry the Fifth's* and *Henry the Sixth's* times. What Grace soever the Queen conferred upon him, it was not to her only that he owed the Fortune which the Reputation of his Wit made. He had the Honour to meet with many great and Uncommon Marks of Favour and Friendship from the Earl of *Southampton*, famous in the Histories of that Time for his Friendship to the unfortunate Earl of *Essex*. It was to that Noble Lord that he Dedicated his *Venus and Adonis* the only Piece of his Poetry which he ever published himself, tho' many of his Plays were surrepticiously and lamely Printed

in his Lifetime. There is one Instance so singular in the Magnificence of this Patron of Shakespear's that if I had not been assured that the Story was handed down by Sir William *D'Avenant*, who was probably very well acquainted with his Affairs, I should not have ventured to have inserted, that my Lord *Southampton*, at one time, gave him a thousand Pounds to enable him to carry through a Purchase which he heard he had a mind to. A Bounty very great, and very rare at any time; and almost equal to that profuse Generosity the Present Age has shown to French Dancers and Italian Eunuchs.

What particular Habitude or Friendships he contracted with private Men, I have not been able to learn, More than that every one who had a true Taste of Merit, and could distinguish Men, had generally a just Value and Esteem for him. His exceeding Candor and Good Nature must certainly have inclined all the gentler Part of the World to love him, As the power of his Wit obliged the Men of the most delicate Knowledge and polite Learning to admire him. Amongst these was the incomparable Mr. *Edmund Spenser*, who speaks of him in his *Tears of the Muses*, not only with the Praises due to a good Poet, but even lamenting his Absence with the tenderness of a Friend. The Passage is in *Thalia's* Complaint for the Decay of Dramatick Poetry, and the contempt the Stage then lay under. I Know some People have been of Opinion that *Shakespear* is not meant by *Willy*,

in the first *stanza* of these Verses, because *Spenser's* Death happened twenty Years before *Shakespear's*. But besides that the Character is not applicable to any Man of that Time but himself, it is plain by the last *Stanza* that Mr. Spencer does not mean that he *was then really* dead but only that he had withdrawn himself from the Publick or at least withheld his Hand from Writing, out of a disgust he had taken at the then ill Taste of the Town, and the mean condition of the Stage.

And he the Man whom Nature's self had made
To mock herself, and Truth to imitate,
With kindly Counter under mimick Shade.
Our pleasant Willy ah! is dead of late:
With him all Joy and jolly merriment
Is also deaded and in Dolour drent.

Instead thereof, scoffing Scurillity
And scorning Folly with Contempt is crept,
Rolling in Rhymes of Shameless Ribaudry,
Without Regard or due Decorum kept;
Each idle Wit at Will presumes to make,
And doth the Learned's Task upon him take.

But that same gentle Spirit, from whose pen
Large Streams of Honey and sweet nectar flow
Scorning the Boldness of such base born Men,
Which dare their Follies forth so rashly throw:
Doth rather choose to *sit in idle cell*
Than so himself to Mockery to sell.

Mr. Dryden was always of Opinion that these Verses were meant of Shakespear; and 't is highly probable they were so, since he was three and thirty Years old at Spenser's Death; and his Reputation in

Poetry must have been great enough before that Time to have deserved what is there said of him. His acquaintance with *Ben Johnson* began with a remarkable piece of Humanity and Good Nature; Mr. Johnson, who was at that Time altogether unknown to the World, had offered one of his Plays to the Players, in order to have it Acted; and the Persons into whose Hands it was put, after having turned it carelessly, and superciliously over, were just upon returning it to him with an ill-natured Answer that it would be of no service to their Company when Shakespear luckily cast his Eye upon it, and found something so well in it as to engage him first to read it through, and afterwards to recommend Mr. *Johnson* and his writings to the Public. After this they were professed friends; tho' I don't know whether the other ever made him an equal return for his Gentleness and Sincerity. *Ben* was naturally Proud and Insolent and in the Days of his Reputation did so far take upon him the Supremacy in Wit, that he could not but look with an evil Eye upon anyone that seemed to stand in Competition with him. And if at times he has affected to commend him, it has always been with some Reserve, insinuating his Uncorrectness, a careless manner of Writing, and want of Judgment; the Praise of seldom altering or blotting out what he writ, which was given him by the Players who were the first Publishers of his Works after his Death, was what *Johnson* could not bear; he thought it impossible perhaps for another Man to

strike out the greatest Thoughts in the finest Expression, and to reach those Excellencies of Poetry with the ease of a first Imagination, which himself with infinite Labour and Study could but hardly attain to. Johnson was certainly a very good Scholar, and in that had the Advantage of Shakespear tho' at the same time I believe it must be allowed that what Nature gave the latter, was more than a Balance for what Books had given the former; and the Judgment of a Great Man upon this Occasion was, I think, very Just and Proper. In a Conversation between Sir *John Suckling*, Sir *William D'Avenant*, Endymion Porter, Mr. Hales of *Eton* and *Ben Johnson*, Sir *John Suckling* who was a professed Admirer of *Shakespear* had undertaken his Defence against *Ben Johnson* with some warmth; Mr. *Hales* who had sat still for some time hearing *Ben* frequently reproaching with the Want of Learning, and Ignorance of the Antients told him at last, *that if Mr. Shakespear had not read the Antients he had likewise not stol'n anything from 'em* (a Fault the other made no Conscience of); *and that if he would produce any one Topic finely treated by any of them, he would undertake to shew something upon the same Subject at least as well written, by Shakespear.* Johnson did indeed take a large liberty even to the transcribing and translating of whole Scenes together; and sometimes with all deference to so great a Name as his, not altogether for the advantage of the Authors of whom he borrowed. And if *Augustus* and *Virgil*

were really as he has made 'em in a Scene of his *Poetaster*, they are as odd an Emperor and a Poet as ever met. *Shakespear*, on the other Hand was beholding to no body farther than the Foundation of the Tale, the Incidents were often his own and the Writing intirely so. There is one play of his, indeed, *The Comedy of Errors*, in a great measure taken from the *Menæchmi* of *Plautus*. How that happened, I cannot easily Divine, Since, as I hinted before, I do not take him to have been Master of *Latin* enough to read it in the Original, and I know of no translation of *Plautus* so Old as his Time.

As I have not proposed to myself to enter into a Large and Compleat Criticism upon Mr. Shakespear's Works, so I suppose it will neither be expected that I should take notice of the severe Remarks that have been formerly made upon him by Mr. *Rhymer*. I must confess, I can't very well see what could be the Reason of his animadverting with so much Sharpness, upon the Faults of a Man excellent on most Occasions, and whom all the World ever was and will be inclined to have an Esteem and Veneration for. If it was to shew his own Knowledge in the Art of Poetry, besides that there is a Vanity in making that only his Design, I question if there be not many Imperfections in those Schemes and Precepts he has given for the Direction of others, as well as in that Sample of Tragedy which he has written to shew the excellency of his own *Genius*. If he had a Pique against the Man, and wrote

on purpose to ruin a Reputation so well established, he has had the Mortification to fail altogether in his Attempt, and to see the World at least as fond of *Shakespear* as of his Critique. But I won't believe a Gentleman and a good natur'd Man, capable of the last intention. Whatever may have been his Meaning finding fault is certainly the easiest Task of Knowledge, and commonly those Men of good judgment, who are likewise of good and Gentle Dispositions, abandon this ungrateful Province to the Tyranny of Pedants. If one would enter into the Beauties of *Shakespear*, there is a much larger as well as a more Delightful Field; but I won't prescribe to the *Tastes* of other People, so I will only take the liberty and with all due Submission to the judgment of others, to observe some of those Things I have been pleased with in looking him over.

His Plays are properly to be distinguished only into Comedies and Tragedies. Those which are called Histories, and even some of his Comedies, are really Tragedies with a run or mixture of Comedy amongst 'em. That way of Trage-Comedy was the common mistake of that Age, and is indeed become so agreeable to the *English* Taste, that tho' the severer Critiques among us cannot bear it yet, the generality of our audiences seem to be better pleased with it than with an exact Tragedy. *The Merry Wives of Winsor*, *The Comedy of Errors* and *The Taming of the Shrew* are all pure Comedy; the rest however they are called have something of both Kinds. 'T is not very easy

to determine which way of Writing he was most Excellent in. There is certainly a great deal of Entertainment in his Comical Humours; and tho' they did not then strike at all ranks of People as the satyr of the Present Age has taken the Liberty to do, yet there is a pleasing and well distinguished Variety in those Characters which he thought fit to meddle with.

Falstaff is allowed by everybody to be a Master-Piece, the Character is always well sustained tho' drawn out into the length of three Plays; and even the account of his Death given by his old Landlady Mrs. Quickly in the first act of *Henry Fifth* tho' it be extremely Natural is yet as diverting as any Part of his Life. If there be any fault in the draught he has made of this lewd old fellow, it is that tho' he has made him a Thief, Lying, Cowardly, Vainglorious and in short every thing Vicious, yet he has given him so much Wit as to make it almost too agreeable, and I don't know whether some People have not in remembrance of the Diversion he had formerly afforded 'em, been sorry to see his friend Hal use him so scurvily when he comes to the Crown in the End of the second Part of *Henry the Fourth*. Amongst other Extravagancies in *The Merry Wives of Winsor* he has made him a Deer-Stealer that he might at the same time remember his *Warwickshire* prosecutor under the Name of Justice *Shallow*; He has given him very near the same coat of Arms which *Dugdale* in his *Antiquities* of that County

describes for a family there and makes the Welsh Parson descant very pleasantly upon 'em. That whole Play is admirable, the Humours are various and well opposed; the main Design which is to cure *Ford* of his unreasonable jealousy is extremely well conducted. *Falstaff's billet doux*, and Mr. Slender's "Ah, Sweet Ann Page!" are very Good Expressions of Love in their Way. In *Twelfth Night* there is something singularly Ridiculous and Pleasant in the Fantastical steward Malvolio. The Parasite and the Vainglorious in Parolles, in *All's Well that Ends Well* is as good as anything of that kind in *Plautus* or *Terence*. *Petruchio*, in *The Taming of the Shrew*, is an uncommon Piece of Humour. The conversation of *Benedick* and *Beatrice* in *Much Ado about Nothing* and of *Rosalind* in *As You Like It*, have much Wit and sprightliness all along. His Clowns, without which Character there was hardly any Play writ in that Time, were all very entertaining: and I believe *Thersites* in *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Apemantus* in *Timon*, will be allowed to be masterpieces of ill nature and *Satyrical* snarling. To these I might add, that incomparable Character of *Shylock the Jew*, in *The Merchant of Venice*; But tho' we have seen that Play received and acted as a Comedy, and the part of the Jew performed by an excellent Comedian, yet I cannot but think it was designed Tragically by the Author. There appears in it such a deadly Spirit of Revenge, such a Savage Fierceness and Fellness and

such a bloody designation of Cruelty and Mischief, as cannot agree either with the style or characters of Comedy. The Play itself, take it altogether, seems to me to be one of the most finished of any of Shakespear's. The Tale indeed, in that Part relating to the Caskets and the extrayagant and unusual kind of Bond given by Antonio, is a little too much removed from the Rules of Probability: But taking the Fact for granted, we must allow it to be very beautifully written.

There is something in the Friendship of Antonio and Bassanio very Great, Generous and Tender. The whole Fourth Act, supposing, as I said, the fact to be probable, is extremely Fine. But there are two Passages that deserve a particular Notice. The first is what Portia says in praise of Mercy, and the other on the power of Music. The Melancholy of Jaques, in *As You Like it*, is as singular and odd as it is diverting, and if what Horace says,

“Difficile est proprie communia Dicere,”

'T will be a hard task for any one to go beyond him in his description of the several Degrees and Ages of Man's Life, tho' the Thought be Old and common enough.

His Images are indeed ev'ry where so lively that the Thing that he would represent stands fully before you, and you possess every part of it. I will venture to point out one more, which is as I think, as strong and

uncommon as anything I ever saw; 'tis an Image of Patience, speaking of a Maid in Love, he says—

She never told her Love,
But let concealment, like a worm i' th' bud
Feed on her damask cheeks: she pined in Thought
And sate like Patience on a Monument,
Smiling at Grief.

What an Image is here given! and what a task it would have been for the greatest Masters of Greece and Rome to have expressed the Passions designed by this sketch of Statuary. The style of his Comedy is, in general, Natural to the Characters, and easie in itself; and the Wit most commonly, sprightly and pleasing, except in those places where he runs into Dogrel Rhymes, as in *The Comedy of Errors* and a passage or two in some other Plays. As for his jingling sometimes, and playing upon Words, it was a common Vise of the Age he liv'd in: and if we find it in the Pulpit made use of as an Ornament to the Sermons of some of the Gravest Divines of those Times; perhaps it may not be thought too light for the Stage. But certainly the greatness of this Author's Genius does no way so much appear, as where he gives Imagination an entire Loose, and raises his Fancy to a flight above Mankind and the Limits of the Visible World. Such are his attempts in *The Tempest*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*. Of these *The Tempest*, however it comes to be placed the first by former Publishers of his Works, can never

have been first written by him: It seems to me as perfect in its Kind as almost anything we have of his. One may observe, that the Unities are kept here with an Exactness uncommon to the Liberties of his Writing: Tho' that was what, I suppose, he valued himself the least upon, since his excellencies were all of another Kind. I am very sensible that he does, in this Play, depart too much from that likeness to Truth which ought to be observed in these sort of Writings; yet he does it so very finely, that one is easily drawn in to have more Faith, for his sake, than Reason does well allow of. His Magic has something in it very Solemn and very Poetical; and that extravagant character of Caliban is mighty well sustained, shews a wonderful Invention in the Author Who could strike out such a particular wild Image and is certainly one of the finest and most uncommon Grotesques that ever was seen. The observation which I have been informed three very great men concurred in making upon this part, was extremely just. "That Shakespear had not only found out a new Character in his Caliban, but had also devised and adapted a new manner of Language for that Character." Among the particular Beauties of this Piece, I think one may be allowed to point out the Tale of Prospero in the first Act; his speech to Ferdinand in the Fourth, upon the Masque of Juno and Ceres; and that in the Fifth, where he dissolves his Charms and resolves to break his Magic Rod. This Play has been altered by Sir Wm. D'Ave-

nant and Mr. Dryden; and tho' I won't arraign the judgment of those two Great Men, yet I think I may be allowed to say, that there are some things left out by them that might, and even ought, to have been kept in. Mr. Dryden was an Admirer of our Author, and indeed he owed him a great deal, as those who have read them both may very easily observe. And I think in Justice to 'em both I should not omit what *Mr. Dryden* has said of him.

Shakespear, who, taught by none, did first impart
 To Fletcher Wit, to lab'ring Jonson Art.
 He Monarch like gave those his Subjects Law,
 And is that Nature which they Paint and Draw.
 Fletcher reach'd that which on his heights did Grow
 While Jonson crept and gathered all below:
 This did his Love, and this his Mirth digest,
 One imitates him most, the other best.
 If they have since out-writ all other Men
 'T is with the Drops that fell from Shakespear's Pen
 The storm which vanish'd on the Neighboring shore¹
 Was taught by Shakespear's *Tempest*, first to roar.
 That Innocence and Beauty which did smile
 In Fletcher, grew on this enchanted Isle.
 But Shakespear's Magic could not copied be,
 Within that Circle none durst walk but he.
 I must confess 't was bold, nor would you now
 That Liberty to Vulgar Wits allow,
 Which works by Magic supernatural things:
 But Shakespear's Pow'r is Sacred as a King's.

Prologue to "The Tempest" as altered by Mr. Dryden.

It is the same magic that raises the Fairies in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the Witches in *Macbeth*,

¹ Alluding to Fletcher's sea-voyage.

and the Ghost in *Hamlet*, with the thoughts and language so proper to the Parts they sustain, and so peculiar to the Talent of the Writer. But of the two last of these Plays I shall have occasion to take Notice among the tragedies of Mr. Shakespear. If one undertook to examine the greatest part of these by those Rules which are established by Aristotle, and taken from the Model of the Grecian Stage, it would be no very hard task to find a great many Faults: But as Shakespear lived under a kind of mere light of Nature, and had never been made acquainted with the Regularity of those precepts, so it would be hard to judge him by a Law he knew Nothing of. We are to consider him as a Man who lived in a state of almost universal License and Ignorance: There was no established Judge, but every one took the Liberty to write according to the Dictates of his own Fancy. When one considers that there is not one Play before him of a Reputation good enough to entitle it to an Appearance on the Present Stage, it cannot but be a Matter of great Wonder that he should advance Dramatic Poetry so far as he did.

The Fable is what is generally placed the first, among those that are reckoned the Constituent Parts of a Tragic or Heroic Poem; not, perhaps, as it is the most Difficult or Beautiful, but as it is the first properly to be thought of in the Contrivance and Course of the whole; and with the Fable ought to be considered the fit, Dis-

position, Order and Conduct of its several Parts. As it is not in this Province of the Drama that the strength and Mastery of Shakespear lay, so I shall not undertake the Tedious and Ill natured Trouble to point out the several Faults he was Guilty of in it. His Tales were seldom invented, but rather taken either from true History, or Novels and Romances: and he commonly made use of 'em in that Order, with those Incidents, and that extent of Time in which he found 'em in the Authors from whence he borrowed them. So *The Winter's Tale*, which is taken from an old Book, call'd *The Delectable History of Dorastus and Faunia*, contains the space of sixteen or seventeen years, and the scene is sometimes laid in Bohemia, and sometimes in Sicily, according to the original Order of the Story. Almost all the Historical Plays comprehend a great length of Time, and very different and Distinct Places: and in his *Antony and Cleopatra*, the scene travels over the greatest Part of the *Roman* Empire. But in Recompense for his Carelessness in this Point, when he comes to another Part of the Drama, *The Manners* of his Characters, in acting or speaking what is proper for them, and fit *to be shown by the Poet*, he may be generally justified, and in very many places greatly commended. For those Plays which he has taken from the English or Roman History, let any Man compare 'em and he will find the Character as exact in the Poet as in the Historian. He seems indeed so far from proposing to himself any

one action for a subject, that the Title often tells you 't is the Life of King John, King Richard etc. What can be more agreeable to the Idea our Historians give of Henry the Sixth, than the Picture Shakespear has drawn of him! His Manners are every where exactly the same with the Story; one finds him still described with Simplicity, passive Sanctity, want of Courage, weakness of Mind, and easy Submission to the Government of an Imperious Wife, or prevailing Faction. Tho' at the same time the Poet does Justice to his good qualities and moves the Pity of his Audience for him, by showing him Pious, Disinterested, a contemner of the Things of this World, and wholly resigned to the severest Dispensations of God's Providence. There is a short scene in the second part of *King Henry Sixth* which I cannot but think admirable of its Kind. Cardinal Beaufort, who had murdered the Duke of *Gloucester*, is shown in the last Agonies on his Death Bed, with the good King praying over him. There is so much Terror in one, so much Tenderness, and moving Piety in the other, as must touch any one who is capable either of Fear or Pity. In his *Henry VIII* that Prince is drawn with the Greatness of Mind, and all those good Qualities which are attributed to him in any account of his Reign. If his Faults are not shewn in an equal degree, and the Shades of this Picture do not bear a just Proportion to the Lights, it is not that the artist wanted either the Colours or the Skill in the Disposition of 'em; but

the Truth I believe, might be, that he forbore doing it out of regard to *Queen Elizabeth*, since it could have been no very great Respect to the Memory of his Mistress, to have exposed certain Parts of her Father's Life upon the Stage. He has dealt much more freely with the Minister of that Great King, and certainly nothing was more justly written than the Character of *Cardinal Wolsey*. He has shown him Tyrannical, Cruel, and Insolent in his Prosperity; and yet, by a wonderful address, he makes his Fall and Ruin the subject of general Compassion. The whole Man, with his Vices and his Virtues, is finely and exactly described in the second Scene of the Fourth Act. The Distresses likewise of *Queen Katherine* in this Play, are very movingly touched; and tho' the art of the Poet has screened *King Henry* from any Gross Imputation of Injustice, yet one is inclined to wish, the Queen had met with a Fortune more worthy of her Birth and Virtue. Nor are the Manners proper to the Persons represented, less justly observed, in those Characters, taken from Roman History; and of this, the Fierceness and Impatience of *Coriolanus*, his Courage and Disdain of the Common People, The Virtue and Philosophical Temper of *Brutus*, and the Irregular Greatness of Mind of *Mark Antony*, are beautiful Proofs. For the two last, especially, you find 'em exactly as they are described by *Plutarch*, from whom certainly, *Shakespeare* copied 'em. He has indeed copied his original

pretty close, and taken in several little Incidents which might have been spared in a Play. But, as I hinted before, his design seems rather to describe those Great Men in the several Fortunes and Accidents of their Lives than to take any single Great Action, and form his Work simply upon that. However there are some of his Pieces, where the Fable is founded on one Action only. Such are more especially, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. The design of *Romeo and Juliet* is plainly the Punishment of two Families, for the Unreasonable Feuds and Animosities, that had been so long kept up between them, and occasioned the Effusion of so much Blood. In the management of the Story, he has shown something Wonderfully Tender and Passionate in the Love Part, and very pitiful in the Distress. *Hamlet* is founded on much the same Tale with the *Electra* of *Sophocles*. In each of 'em a young Prince is engaged to Revenge the Death of his Father, and the Mothers are both concerned in the Murder of their Husbands, and are afterwards married to the Murderers. There is in the first Part of the Greek Tragedy, something very moving in the grief of *Electra*; but as Mr. D'Acier has observed, there is something very unnatural and shocking in the Manners he had given that Princess and her brother in the latter Part. Orestes imbrues his Hands in the blood of his own Mother; and that Barbarous Action is performed, tho' not immediately upon the Stage, yet so near that the Audience hear

Clytemnestra crying out to *Æghystus* for Help, and to her Son for Mercy, While *Electra* her daughter, and a Princess, both of them Characters that ought to have appeared with more Decency, stands upon the Stage and encourages her Brother in the Parricide! What horror does this not Raise! *Clytemnestra* was a wicked woman, and had deserved to Die, Nay, in the Truth of the story she was killed by her own Son; but to Represent an Action of this Kind upon the Stage, is certainly an Offence against those Rules of Manners proper to the Persons that ought to be observed there. On the contrary, let us only look a little on the Conduct of *Shakespear*. *Hamlet* is represented with the same Piety towards his Father, and Resolution to Revenge his Death as Orestes. He has the same abhorrence for his Mother's Guilt, which, to provoke him the more, is heightened by Incest: But 't is with wonderful Art and justness of Judgment, that the Poet restrains him from doing Violence to his Mother. To prevent anything of that kind, he makes his Father's Ghost forbid that Part of the Vengeance.

But howsoever thou pursuest this Act,
Taint not thy Mind; nor let thy Soul Contrive
Against thy Mother aught; leave her to Heaven,
And to those Thorns that in her Bosom lodge,
To prick and sting her."

This is to distinguish rightly between *Horror* and *Terror*. The latter is a proper Passion of Tragedy, but the former ought always to be carefully avoided.

And certainly no Dramatic Writer ever succeeded better in raising Terror in the Minds of his Audience, than *Shakespeare* has done. The whole Tragedy of *Macbeth*, but more especially the Scene where the King is murdered, in the second Act, as well as this Play is a noble proof of that Manly Spirit with which he writ; and both shew how powerful he was in giving the strongest Motions to our Souls that they are capable of. I cannot leave *Hamlet*, without taking notice of the Advantage with which we have seen this Masterpiece of *Shakespeare* distinguish itself upon the Stage by Mr. Betterton's fine Performance of that Part. A Man, who tho' he had no other Good Qualities, as he had a great Many, must have made his way into the Esteem of all Men of Letters, by this only Excellency, No Man is better acquainted with *Shakespeare's* manner of Expression, and indeed he has studied him so well, and is so much Master of him that whatever Part of his he Performs he does it as if it had been written on purpose for him, and that the Author had exactly conceived it as he plays it.

I must own a Particular Obligation to him, for the most considerable part of the Passages relating to his Life, which I have here transmitted to the Public, his Veneration for the Memory of *Shakespeare* having engaged him to make a journey into Warwickshire, on purpose to gather up what remains he could of a Name for which he had so great a Value. Since I had at first resolved not to enter into any Critical Contro-

versy, I won't pretend to enquire into the Justness of *Mr. Rhymer's* Remarks on *Othello*; he has certainly pointed out some Faults very judiciously; and they are such as most people will agree, with him, to be Faults. But I wish he had likewise observed some of the Beauties too; as I think it became an Exact and Equal Critique to do. It seems strange that he should allow nothing Good in the whole: If the Fable and the Incidents are not to his Taste, yet the thoughts are almost every where very Noble, and the Diction Manly and proper. These last, indeed are part of Shakespear's Praise, which it would be very hard to Dispute with him. His sentiments and Images of Things are great and Natural; and his Expression (tho' perhaps in some Instances a little Irregular) just, and raised in Proportion to the Subject and Occasion. It would be even endless to mention the particular Instances that might be given of this Kind: But this book is in the Possession of the Public, and 't will be hard to dip into any Part of it, without finding what I have said of him made good.

The latter Part of his Life was spent, as all Men of Good Sense will Wish theirs may be, in Ease, Retirement, and the Conversation of his Friends. He had the Good Fortune to gather an Estate equal to his Occasion, and, in that, to his Wish; and is said to have spent some Years before his Death at his Native *Stratford*. His pleasurable Wit, and Good-nature, engaged him in the Acquaintance, and entitled him to

the Friendship of the Gentlemen of the Neighborhood. Amongst them it is a story almost still remembered in that Country that he had a particular Intimacy with a Mr. *Combe*, an Old Gentleman noted thereabouts for his Wealth and Usury: It happened that in a pleasant Conversation among their Common Friends, Mr. *Combe* told Mr. *Shakespear*, in a laughing manner, that he fancied he intended to write his Epitaph, if he happened to outlive him; and since he could not know what might be said of him when he was dead, he desired that it might be done Immediately: Upon which *Shakespear* gave him these four verses:

Ten in a the Hundred lies here ingraved.
 'T is a Hundred to Ten that his Soul is not saved;
 If any Man ask, Who lies in this Tomb.
 Oh Ho! quoth the Devil, 't is my John à *Combe*.

But the sharpness of the Satire is said to have stung the Man so severely, that he never forgave it.

He died in the 53rd Year of his Age, and was buried on the North Side of the Chancel, in the Great Church at *Stratford* where a Monument as engraved in the Plate, is Placed in the Wall. On his Grave stone underneath is,

Good Friend, for Jesus sake, forbear
 To Dig the Dust inclosed here.
 Blest be the Man that spares these Stones,
 And Curst be he that moves my Bones.

He had three Daughters, of which two lived to be married; Judith, the elder to one Mr. Thomas

Quinney, by whom he had three sons, who all died without Children; and Susannah, who was his Favorite, to Dr. John Hall, a physician of Good Reputation in that Country. She left one child only, a Daughter, who was first married to Thomas Nash Esq. and afterwards to Sir John Barnard of Abington, but died likewise without Issue.

This is what I could learn of any Note, either relating to himself or his Family: The Character of the Man is best seen in his Writings. But since *Ben Johnson* has made a sort of an Essay towards it in his *Discoveries*, Tho' as I have before hinted, he was not very Cordial to his Friendship, I will venture to give it in his Words.

“I remember the Players have often mentioned it as an Honour to Shakespear, that in Writing (whatsoever he penned) *he never blotted out a Line*. My answer hath been—*Would he had blotted out a Thousand*, which they thought a malevolent Speech. I had not told Posterity this, but for their Ignorance, who chose that Circumstance to Commend their Friend by, wherein he most Faulted, And to Justify my own Candor (for I loved the Man, and do Honour his Memory, on this side of Idolatry, as much as any). He was indeed Honest, and of an open and free Nature, had an excellent Fancy, Brave Notions, and Gentle Expressions; wherein he flowed with that Facility, that sometimes it was necessary

that he should be stopped. 'Sufflaminandus erat,' as Augustus said of Haterius. His Wit was in his own Power, would that the Rule of it had been so too. Many times he fell into those things could not escape Laughter; as when he said in the Person of Cæsar, one speaking to him:

Cæsar, thou dost me wrong.

He replied:

Cæsar did never Wrong, but with just Cause—

and such like, which were ridiculous. But he redeemed his Vices, with his Virtues: There was ever more in him to be Prais'd than to be Pardon'd."

As for the Passage which he mentions out of Shakespeare, there is somewhat like it in *Julius Cæsar*, but without the Absurdity; nor did I ever meet with it in any edition that I have seen as quoted by Mr. *Johnson*. Besides his Plays in this Edition there are two or three ascribed to him by Mr. *Langbain* which I have never seen and Know nothing of. He writ likewise *Venus and Adonis*, and *Tarquin* and *Lucrece* in stanzas which have been printed in a late collection of Poems. As to the Character given of him by *Ben Johnson* there is a good deal true in it: But I believe it may be as well expressed by what Horace says of the First Romans who wrote Tragedy upon the Greek Models (or indeed translated 'em) in his Epistle to Augustus.

Natura Sublimis et Acer nam spirat Tragicum satis et feliciter
Audet.

Sed turpem putat in Chartis metuitq-Lituram.

There is a book of Poems published in 1640 under the name of Mr. William Shakespear, but as I have but very lately seen it without an opportunity of making any Judgment upon it, I won't pretend to determine whether it be his or no.

APPENDIX II

"STOWE'S ANNALS"

- 1586 This year, like as in the month of August, so in September, October and November fell great rains, whereupon high waters overflowing the low countries, wheat and other grains grew to a great price, so that wheat-meal sold in London for ten shillings the bushel.
Sunday Dec. 5. Earth moving in Kent.
- 1587 October 8. J. Low, J. Adams and R. Dibdale having been made priests by the authority of the Pope of Rome were hanged at Tyburn and quartered.
Dec. 10. Two seminary priests executed and three abettors.
- 1591 April 27. Sir John Parrott arraigned at Westminster, condemned but fell sick and died in tower in June.
- 1592 Plague in London (theaters closed).
to
- 1593 Feb. 18. A priest one Harrington hanged.

- 1593 Last of February. Rodericke Lopez, a Portingale, professing Physicke, was arraigned and found guilty of high treason for conspiring her Majesty's destruction by Poyson, executed June 7.
- 1595 17th of November. A day of great triumph for the long prosperous reign of her Majesty; at Court the Earl of Cumberland, Champion for the Queen, the Earls of Essex, Bedford, Southampton with others, ran at the tilt most bravely.
- 1597 This year in May great preparation being made for the Seas, 550 soldiers pressed in the city of London, trained in the fields at charges of the citizens, picked men out of shires 6000. 500 Gentlemen voluntaries, very gallant persons, bravely furnished of all things necessary, besides superfluity, in gold lace, plumes and feathers and such like, Earl of Essex Admirall of the sea and General of the Army by land, aided by Earls of Rutland, & Southampton, Lords Gray & Rich. Walter Raleigh Captain of the Guard.
- Essex arraigned at Michaelmas eve. 1599.
- 17 of November. At the 42nd anniversary of the Queens reign, great tiltings and triumphs.
- June 8th 1600 (43rd year). Earl of Essex suspended from all his offices.

Sunday 8th of Feb. 1601. Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, about ten of the clock before noon, assisted by sundry noblemen and gentlemen, in warlike manner departed from his house by the strand and entered the city of London by Temple bar. Entered Fenchurch St. and demanded armour . . . active all day but retreated in the evening and fortified his house but, understanding that great ordnance was ordered to beat it down, yeelded.

25 Feb. 1601. Essex executed. "Puffed with pride and vanitie and the love of the World's pleasures."

The hangman was beaten as he returned from thence, so that the Sheriffs of London were called to rescue him, or he wold have been murdered. The last of February. Mark Bosworth and T. Silcox priests, executed. A gentlewoman, a widow, Mrs. Anne Lane, executed for relieving a priest. Woodhouse, Mericke Knight, and Cuff, gent. were hanged for assisting Essex.

18th of March. C. Danvers and C. Blunt beheaded (for Essex conspiracy).

1602 Two executions of booksellers for publishing literature offensive to the Queen's majesty, also three priests.

1603 March 24. Deceased Queen Elizabeth at her Manor in Surrey. James the first. God make us thankful!

Divers prisoners touching the late Essex rebellion were delivered out of the tower namely Earl of Southampton. 10 of April 1603.

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM ROWLAND WHYTE'S CORRESPONDENCE, VOLUME II

(From Sidney Papers and Memorials of State.)

The following extracts cast a curious light on the Essex conspiracy and show how many of the Queen's courtiers were implicated therein. The writer was a protégé of Sir Robert Sidney, Philip's elder brother, Warden of the Cinq Ports and consequently resident in Flushing, where these letters were addressed. Rowland Whyte was his paid agent, with the mission of keeping him informed of Court happenings, and also to remind those in high office that his patron was in quest of any perquisites, which might be induced to "come his way." Rowland Whyte seems to have transacted his delicate business with zeal and tact; it is quite amusing to see how suddenly he becomes indiscreet towards her sacred Majesty after his Lord's assurance that his letters would be immediately burned! Unfortunately, just as we approach the crucial point of the correspondence, the actual outbreak of the revolt, the letters abruptly cease, for the very ex-

cellent reason that Robert Sidney himself had to be on the scene of action and his faithful agent obtained him leave of absence from his post during this thrilling time.

14 January, 1597.

. . . I hear that My Lord Southampton goes with Mr. Secretary to France, which course of his doth exceedingly grieve his Mistress that passes her time in weeping and lamenting. . . .

19 January, 1597.

. . . I was told by one that knows much that Sir Walter Rawleigh labours mightily to have something done for him before Mr. Secretary's going away and that he doth importune Lord Essex to be a furtherer of yt. . . . My Lord Essex stands firm to you.

I heard of some unkindness should be between My Lord Southampton and his Mistress, occasioned by some report of Ambrose Willoughby, My Lord Southampton called him to an account for it but the matter was made knowen to my Lord Essex and my Lord Chamberlain, who had them in examinicion: What the cause was I could not learn, for it was but new, but I see My Lord Southampton full of discontentments.

21 January, 1597.

The Quarrel of my Lord Southampton and Ambrose Willoughby grew upon this. That he, with Sir

Walter Rawleigh and Mr. Parker, being at Primero in the presence chamber the Queen was gone to bed and he, being there as Squier of the body, desired them to give over, soon after he spake to them again that if they would not leave he would call in the guard and pull down the board, which Sir Walter Rawleigh seeing, put up his money and went his ways: but My Lord Southampton took exception at him and told him that he would remember it, and soe finding him between the tennis court wall and the garden, strooke him and Willoughby pulled off some of his locks. The Queen gave Willoughby thanks for what he did in the presence.¹

28 January, 1597.

My Lord Southampton is now at court, who for a while, by her Majesty's command, did absent himself.

¹The allusion to the quarrel between Southampton and Ambrose Willoughby has made me wonder whether this may not furnish us with the key to the name of "Willobie" as applied to Southampton in the scurrilous pamphlet called *Willobie his Avis*, ordered out of print in 1596. I believe that Southampton travelled like his illustrious prototype "Prince Hal" incognito, under the name of Henry Willoughby. This would explain many of the knotty points in the poem, which deals with his Oxford adventure, especially the end, which refers to the licentious young noble as being "deaded," but "whether dead or no, the author cannot tell—certainly he hath passed beyond any inquiry that he could make."

There is, I think, no doubt that Ambrose Willoughby was the "suborned informer" spoken of by Shakespeare, as well as the person who had "played unfriendly parts toward Southampton," of Rowland Whyte's letters.—C. L. C.

30 January, 1597.

My Lord Cobham, Rawleigh and Southampton do severally feast Mr. Secretary before he departs, and have plaies and banquets.

1 February, 1597.

. . . Lord Southampton is much troubled at her Majesty's straungest usage of him, some body hath played unfriendly parts with him. Mr. Secretary hath procured him license to travel. His fair Mistress doth wash her fairest face with many tears. I pray God that his going away bring her to no such infirmity which is, as it were, hereditary to her name.

(At night) 28 February, 1597.

. . . For that man you writ about to the Earl of Essex, I do not know what success it will take, seeing him so indisposed with malincholy, it may be about that.

14 May, 1597.

. . . It is given out that the intended preparacion is for Ireland, and for the defense of that land against Spain. The Earl of Essex seems not to be an actor in it, only setts it forward with all the favour he hath.

2 June, 1597.

My Good Lord,

Yesterday My Lord Essex ryd to Chatham. My Lord Northumberland is much grieved at the death of the Lord Percy, his sonne; he was once resolved to

go along with My Lord Essex but now is altered. My Lord's Essex' patent is drawing and I hear that all his officers of the army are knowen, euen as I write, My Lord Southampton goes, so doth My Lord Gray. . . .

8 March, 1599.

All this week the Lords have been in London and passed away the time in feasting and plaies. Vereiken dined upon wednesday with My Lord Treasurer who made him a roiall dinner; upon Thursday My Lord Chamberlain feasted him, and made him a very great and delicate dinner, and there, in the afternoon his Players^t acted before Vereiken, "SIR JOHN OLD-CASTLE," to his great contentment.

11 October, 1599.

My Lord,

Now that you have assured me to burn my letters, I will leave no circumstance unwritten of My Lord Essex' disgrace, that I can hear of. He remains still at my Lord Keepers, very humble and submissive, wonderfully grieved at Her Majesty's displeasure towards him. Yt is given out that if he wold desire his liberty and go to Yrland again he should have it. But he seems resolved never to go thither again, nor

^t"His Players" were Shakespeare's company and "Sir John Oldcastle" was the first title of King Henry the Fourth. The name of the principal character was altered to John Falstaff owing to the request of the honourable family of Oldcastle who did not enjoy the antics of "Sir John" under their name.—C.L.C.

to meddle with any matters of Warre or State, and only lead a Private Cowntry Life. The World speaks diversly of his imprisonment. Tis said pamphlets have been cast out and suppressed which I never saw, sure yt must turn to his harm. The Ladies Southampton and Rich, were at Essex House, but are gonne to the Country to shunne the company that daily were wont to visit them in town because it gave offence at the court. His very servants are affrayd to meet in any place to make merry, lest it might be ill taken. . . . At the Court My Lady Scroope only is noted to stand firm for him, for she endures much daily at her Majesty's hands because she doth doe all the kynd offices of Love to the Queen in his behalf, She wears alle black, she mourns and is pensive, . . . Tis thought she says much that few would venture to say except herself. What the Queen will determine is not knowen, but I see little hope appearing of any sudden liberty. My Lord Southampton and Lord Rutland came not to court, the one doth but very seldom, they pass away the time in London, merely in going to plaies every day.

3 October, 1593.

My Lord,

T. Novett is come and delivered me 3 letters from you, one to My Lord Herbert, one to My Lady Pembroke which shall be carefully delivered. . . . My Lord Essex continues in durance, only attended upon

by Wiseman and another. A Howse is kept at Essex Howse for My Lord and Lady Southampton and the family. I am bold to wryte all things that I hear, becus I know you will burn my letters, els I would not doe itt.

4 October, 1599.

Yt is to be feared that his Lordship hath greatly offended Her Maestie; These are matters I have nothing to doe withal, farre above my reach, but untoe you that doth liue abroad, whose wisdom I know to be such as you will pray for the safety of our most Graceous Princess.

16 October, 1599.

. . . My Lady Essex' daughter was christened by the Earl of Southampton, the Lady Cumberland and Lady Rutland without much ceremony.

4 November, 1599.

. . . All the Earles friends doe constantly believe that he shall be removed to his own house and in tyme shall come to Court, truly, My Lord, I could wish it soe, but a man cannot tell what to say to things till that they be done. I see My Lady his wife, goe from one to one, and small comfort can she receive by such as are in authority, who will not trouble the Queen with her desires. What is wrought for his good, is donne by the ladies that have access to the Queen.

29 March, 1600.

My Lord Southampton attends to morrow to kisse the Queen's hands; if he miss it, it is not likely that he shall obtain it in some time. I hear that he will go to Yreland and hopes by some notable service to merit it.

26 April, 1600.

Mr. Philip Herbert is here and one of the forwardest courtiers that ever I saw in my time, for he had not been here two hours before he grew as bold as the best. Upon Tuesday he goes back again, full sore against his will. My Lord Herbert read the long letter that you writt and promises to write. My Lord Southampton went away on Monday last, Sir Charles Danvers brought him as far as Coventry but returned yesternight, he is a very fine gentleman and loves you well.

3 May, 1600.

. . . My Lady Essex came this afternoon of purpose to see My Lady and her children, to see her clad as she was, was a pittiful spectacle, her Lord continues very private and she is a humble suitor to the Queen that she may live with him and his keeper removed.

24 May, 1600 (by post).

My Lord Bedford is come to town and his Lady to honour the marriage of Mistress Anne Russell, but the day is not yet set by Her Majesty, which troubles many of her friends who stay in town to do her that service.

Monday, 26 May, 1600.

This morning, My Lord Herbert and Sir Charles Danvers have taken water, and gone to see My Lady Rich and My Lady Southampton, almost as far as Gravesend. It will be Thursday 'ere they return.

7 June, 1600.

. . . I hear it was a most pitiful and lamentable sight to see him (Essex) that was the mignon of fortune, now unworthy of the least honour he had of many, Many that were present, burst out in tears at his fall to so much misery.

11 June, 1600.

Mistress Anne Russell went from court upon a Monday last, with eighteen coaches. The Queen in Publick used her with gracious speeches. The marriage will be upon Monday next, Her Majesty will be there it is hoped.

14 June, 1600.

Her Majesty is in very good health and purposes to honour the marriage of Mistress Anne Russell with her presence. There is to be a memorable masque of 8 ladies, they have a straunge dawnce, newly invented, their attire is this; each hath a skirt of cloth of silver, a rich waistcoat, wrought with silkes, gold and silver, a mantell of carnacion taffety cast under the arm and their hair loose about their shoulders, curiously knotted and interlaced. These are the

maskers: My Ladye Dorydye, Mrs. Fitton, Mrs. Carey, Mrs. Onslow, Mrs. Southwell, Mrs. Bes Russell, Mrs. Darcey and My Ladye Blanche Somerset. These 8 dawnce to a music Apollo brings, and there is a fine speech that makes mention of a ninth, much to her honour and Praise. The preparacion for this feast is sumptuous and great, but it is to be feared the howse in Blackfriars will be to littell for such a company. The marriage is upon Monday. What els will happen at it, I will signifie when it is past.

28 June, 1600.

This day sennight Her Majesty was at Blackfriars, to grace the marriage of Lord Herbert and his wife. The bride met the Queen at the waterside where my Lord Cobham had provided a litter wherein she was carried to My Lady Russels' by six knights. After supper the mask came on, as I writ in my last, and delicate it was to see 8 ladies soe prettily drest. Mrs. Fitton led and after they had done all their ceremonies these 8 maskers chose 8 more ladies to dawnce the measures. Mrs. Fitton went to the Queen and wooed her to dawnce. Her Majesty asked what she was. "Affection," she said, "Affection!" said the Queen, "Affection is false," but she rose and dawnced. The gifts given that day were valewed at 1000 pounds in plate and jewels at the least. The entertainment great and plentiful and Lady Russell much commended for it.

28 June, 1600.

Her Majesty greatly troubled by the number of knights made by Essex in Ireland, decides to depose them by Public proclamation. Mr. Bacon is thought to be the man that moves her Majesty to it.

Sunday night, 27 July, 1600.

Her Majesty's displeasure continues toward the Earl of Essex & My Lady Rich is appointed to be before the Lords, and the scholar that writ *Harry the 4th* is committed to the Tower.¹

¹ Mr. Acheson kindly furnishes me with the following information: "The allusion in Rowland Whyte's letters to the 'scholar that writ *Harry the 4th*' was to Wm. Heywood who wrote such a play and dedicated it to Essex. He got into trouble with the authorities and was imprisoned for a while. Upon the accession of James I. he was knighted. The deposition of Richard II. was supposed to reflect the suggested deposition of Elizabeth."

APPENDIX IV

NOTES

FULMAN'S NOTES ON SHAKESPEARE'S DEER-STEALING

Rev. Alexander Dyce (Edition of Shakespeare, page xxii), in the note on the deer-stealing episode, says: "First put in print by Rowe 1709, but in the archives of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, are the MS. collections of a learned antiquary, Rev. Wm. Fulman who died in 1688, with additions by a friend to whom he bequeathed them, Rev. Richard Davis, rector of Sapperton & Archdeacon of Litchfield, who died in 1708. Among the papers, under the article 'Shakespeare' the following additions by Davies are found: 'Much given to all unluckinesse in stealing venison and rabbits particularly from Sr. Lucy who had him often whipt and sometimes imprisoned, and at last made him fly his native country, to his great advancement; but his revenge was so great that he is his Justice Clodpate, and calls him a great man, and that in allusion to his name, bore three louses rampant for arms.'

“Rowe speaks of the ballad on Sir Thomas Lucy as being ‘lost’ according to Oldys: ‘There was a very aged gentleman living in the neighborhood of Stratford where he died some fifty years since, who had not only heard from several old people in that town of Shakespeare’s transgression, but could remember the first stanza of the ballad: which repeating to one of his acquaintance, he preserved it in writing, and here it is, neither better nor worse, but faithfully transcribed from the copy which his relation very courteously communicated to me:

A parliament member, a justice of peace,
 At home a poor scare-crow at London an asse;
 If Lowsie is Lucy as some volke miscalle it,
 Then Lucy is lowsie whatever befall it:
 He thinks himself great
 Yet an asse in his state
 We allow by his ears but with asses to mate,
 If Lucy is Lowsie, as some volke miscall it,
 Sing O lowsie Lucy, Whatever befall it.

Capell gives exactly the same version of the stanza which he obtained through the Grandson of its transcriber, Mr. Thomas Jones, who dwelt at Tarbick, a village in Worcestershire, a few miles from Stratford, and dyed in the year 1703 upwards of 90 and remembered to have heard from several old people the same account as that given by Rowe, except that he says the ballad was hung on the park gate which exasperated the Knight to apply to a Warwickshire

lawyer to proceed against him." (Transmitted by Thomas Wilkes to Capell's father.)¹

JOHN AUBREY (1625—1696)

Modern readers owe to the excellent edition of Aubrey's *Brief Lives, Chiefly of Contemporaries*, published by Andrew Clark, the pleasure of becoming familiar at first hand with one of the most entertaining books ever written. Aubrey says himself, in one of his most curious sketches (that of Venetia, Lady Digby), "How these curiosities would be quite forgotten, did not such idle fellows as I am putt them down"; and indeed we owe him an inestimable debt of gratitude, for his "Lives" are the most fresh, sincere, and natural emanation that one can imagine, and what is wanting in complete accuracy, for he wrote as one would speak, in an "impressionistic" manner, not stopping to verify quotations or dates, is amply made up for by the absolutely living picture he gives us of his contemporaries.

Moreover this racy style of narration does not prove carelessness of the truth, for Aubrey's notes were written at the instigation of Anthony à Wood, the learned Oxford antiquary. They were to serve Wood as a basis of information to his great work *Athenæ*

¹ Malone takes pains to prove that Lucy had no park at Charlecote. He may, however, have had deer, for his son and successor sent a buck as a present to Lord Ellesmere in 1602 (Egerton Papers, Camden Society).

Oxoniensis, one of the most painstaking monuments of research ever printed; and Aubrey knew full well that he could count on Wood to correct inaccuracies of detail. Unfortunately for us, the whole manuscript was not used by Wood, whose work dealt only with such distinguished personages as had graduated at Oxford. Those who did not belong to this university were not placed in the *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, but remained among Aubrey's own papers, being first published *in extenso* as aforesaid in 1898 by Professor Clark.

How these notes came to be written I shall set down in Mr. Clark's own words:

Aubrey sought and obtained an introduction to Anthony Wood in August, 1667. He was keenly interested in antiquarian studies and had the warmest love for Oxford: he was drawn to Wood on hearing that he was busy with researches into the history of the University of Oxford. Aubrey was one of those eminently good-natured men, who are very slothful in their own affairs, but spare no pains to work for a friend. He offered his help to Wood . . . and that help proved most valuable.

Aubrey, through his family and family connexions, and by reason of his restless goings-to-and-fro, had a wide circle of acquaintance among squires and politicians, parsons, lawyers, doctors, merchants and men of letters, and persons of quality both in town and country. He had been, until his estate was squandered, an extensive and curious buyer of books and MSS. And, above all, being a good gossip, he had used to the utmost those opportunities of inquiry about men and things which had been afforded him by societies, grave, like the Royal Society, and frivolous, as coffee-house gatherings and tavern clubs. . . . We soon find him thanking Wood for setting him to work:

"'T will be a pretty thing, and I am glad you putt me on it. I doe it playingly. This morning being up by 10, I writt two lives:

one was Sir John Suckling. . . . My memoirs of lives is now a booke of 2 quires, close written: and after I had begun it, I had such an impulse on my spirit that I could not be at quiet till I had done it. . . . I believe never any in England were delivered so faithfully and with so good authority. Tis pittie that such minutes had not been taken 100 years since or more: for want of which many worthy men's names and notions are swallowed-up in oblivion; as much as these also would have been, had it not been through your instigation, and perhaps this is one of the usefulest pieces that I have scribbeld.

"I remember one saying of generall Lambert's, that 'the best of men are but men at the best': of this you will meet divers examples in this rude and hastie collection. Now these *arcana* are not fitt to lett flie abroad, till about 30 years hence; for the author and the persons (like medlars) ought first to be rotten."

Aubrey says of his own talents: "When a boy my fancy lay most to geometry. If ever I had been good for anything, twould have been a painter, I could fancy a thing so strongly and had so cleare an ideae of it. I did ever love to converse with old men, as living histories."

That the author of the *Brief Lives* was a man of versatile and remarkable talents, I think no one who glances over his sketches for possible inventions will deny, since they contain the germs of most of the wonders of modern times. In Aubrey's manuscript are some sketches for proposed inventions; one is for a balloon: "Fill or force in smoake into a bladder and try if the bladder will not be carried up in the ayre. If it is so several bladders may draw a man up into the ayre." Another memorandum says: "Propose that Mr. Packer sends to Norfolk to the gentleman that hath, with much curiosity, measured the feathers in the wings of several birds and taken

proportions of them and the weight of their bodies, and send to Mr. Francis Potter for his notions of flying and of being safely delivered upon the ground from great height with a sheet. . . . Dr. Wilkins has notion of an umbrella-like invention for retarding a ship when she drives in a storm."

"For a sowing machine—Let a ginne be invented to shatter out corn by jogging instead of sowing or setting, the one being too wasteful, the other taking up too much time, and that sowing and harrowing may be but one and the same labour."

I find in his note on Sir Philip Sidney the following interesting reminiscence:

"His body was putt in a leaden coffin, and with wonderful great state carried to Paul's Church. There solemnized this funeral all the nobility and great officers of Court, all the Judges and Sargeants at Lawe: all the soldiers, commanders and gentry that were in London etc. His body was borne on men's shoulders (perhaps it was a false coffin).

"When I was a boy 9 years old, I was with my father at one Mr. Singleton's, an alderman and wollendrapèr in Gloster, who had in his Parlour, over the chimney, the whole description of the funerall, engraved and printed on papers pasted together which, at length, was I beleeve, the length of the room at least; but he had contrived it to turn upon two pinnes, that turning one of them made the figures march all in order. It did make such a strong impression on

my young Phantasy that I remember it as if it were but yesterday."

JOHN FLORIO

(From *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, by Anthony, à Wood, vol. i., page 497.)

"John Florio, 'The resolute,' as he signed himself, was born in London in the latter end of the reign of Henry VIII., a little before which time his father (descended from the Florii of Sienna) and mother who were Waldenses had fled from the Valtolline into England for religions sake. But when King Edward VI. died and the protestant religion was silenc'd by Q. Mary, they left England and went to another country, where Jo Florio received his puerile literature. After protestancy was restored by Q. Eliz. they returned, and Florio for a time lived in this University (Oxford). At length Richard Barnes, Bishop of Durham, sending his son Emmanuel to Mag. Col. to obtain Academy literature in the quality of a commoner, about 1576, Florio was appointed to attend him as tutor in the Italian, English and French tongues at which time, wearing a gown he was matriculated a member of that house, in 1581 and aged about 36 years, and as a teacher and instructor of certain scholar's of the University.

"After King James came to the Crown he was appointed tutor to Prince Henry for those languages and made one of the Privy chamber and Clerk of the

Closet to Queen Anne to whom he was tutor also. He was a very useful man in his profession, zealous in his religion, and much devoted to the English Nation.

“Published *First Fruits*, London, 1578.

“*Introduction to Italian & English Languages*, both dedicated to Rob Earl of Leicester.

“*Second Frutes*, 1591, Oct.

“*Dict. Ital. English*, 1597, afterwards augmented to *Queen Anna's New World of Words*. 1611.

“Florio also translated from French into English the essays of Michael Lord of Montaigne, London, 1603, and other things as 't is said but such I have not yet. Died at Fulham of plague, August, 1625.”

SAMUEL DANIEL

According to Anthony à Wood (*Athenæ Oxoniensis*, vol. i., page 447), Samuel Daniel belonged to a wealthy family of Somerset. He matriculated at the age of seventeen in 1579 from Magdalen College, Oxford, and became, after the accession of King James the first, Groom of the Chamber to his consort, Anne of Denmark, “Who, being a favourer of the Muse took him under her especial patronage as she did also J. Florio who married Samuel Daniel's sister.”

Anne, Countess of Pembroke, was also an admirer of Samuel Daniel and erected a monument to his memory. This distinguished patroness of the muses died at the age of eighty-seven (1675).

BEN JONSON (1574-1637)

(MS. Aubrey, slightly abridged.)

“Mr. Benjamin Jonson Poet laureat; I remember when I was a scholar at Trinity Coll. Oxon 1646, I heard Dr. Ralph Bathurst (now Dean of Wells) say that Ben Jonson was a Warwickshire man.-sed quære. Tis agreed that his father was a minister; and by his epistle dedicat. of *Every Man* to Mr. Wm. Camden that he was a Westminster scholar and that Mr. W. Camden was his schoolmaster. His mother, after his father’s death, married a brick-layer, and ’t is generally sayd that he wrought some time with his father-in-lawe particularly on the garden wall of Lincoln’s Inne next to Chancery Lane, and that a knight, a bencher, walking thro’ and hearing him repeat some Greek verses out of Homer, discoursing with him and finding him to have a witt extraordinary, gave him some exhibition to maintaine him at Trinity College in Cambridge.

“Then he went into the lowe countries and spent some time (not very long) in the armie.

“Then he came over to England and acted and wrote, but both ill, at the Green curtaine, a kind of nursery, or obscure playhouse, some where in the suburbs, I think towards Shoreditch or Clarkenwell.

“Then he undertooke againe to write a playe, and did hitt it admirably well, viz. *Every Man* . . . which was his first good one.

“He was, or rather had been of a clear faire skin, his habit was very plaine. I have heard Mr. Lacy, the player, say, that he was wont to weare a coate like a coachman’s coat, with slitts under the arme pitts. He would many times exceed in drink (Canarie was his beloved liquor): then he would tumble home to bed and when he had perspired, then to studie. I have seen his studying chair, which was of strawe such as old women used, and as Aulus Gellius is drawn in.

“When I was in Oxon, Bishop Skinner who lay at our college, was wont to say that he understood an author as well as any man in England.

“Long since, in King James’s time, I have heard my Uncle Danvers say, who knew him, that he lived without Temple-Barre, at a comb makers shop, about the Elephant and Castle. In his later time he lived in Westminster in the house under which you passe as you goe out of the churchyard into the old palace; where he died. He lies buried in the North aisle opposite to the scutcheon of Robertus de Ros, with this inscription only on him,

O RARE BEN JONSON

Which was done at the charge of Jack Young (afterwards knighted) who, walking there when his grave was covering, gave the fellow eighteen pence to cutt it.

“’T was an ingeniose remark of Lady Hoskins that

B. J. never writes of love, or if he does, it does not come naturally.

“The King made him write against the Puritans, who began to be very troublesome in his time.

“A GRACE BY BEN JONSON, EXTEMPORE, BEFORE KING JAMES

“Our King & Queen, the Lord-God besse,
The Paltzgrave, and the Lady Besse,
And God bless every living thing
That lives and breathes, and loves the King.
God bless the Council of Estate,
And Buckingham, the fortunate,
God besse them all, and keepe them safe,
And God besse me, and God besse Raph.

“The King was mighty enquisitive to know who this ‘Raph’ was. Ben told him ’t was the drawer at the *Swanne* taverne, who drew him good Canarie. For this drollery his Majestie gave him an hundred pounds.”

Aubrey appends a letter from Isaac Walton written in 1680, when he was eighty-seven years of age, concerning some supplementary information of his own about Ben Jonson, but it is scarcely in harmony with the taste of the present age though we can imagine with what delight Aubrey added it to his collection.

ANTHONY À WOOD (1632-1695)

This distinguished antiquary was one of the most erudite and painstaking of biographers. Unfortun-

ately for us, his monumental work, *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, deals necessarily only with such distinguished persons as were matriculated, or had at least been "commoners," at Oxford University. Consequently it includes no biography of Shakespeare, but mentions him in the text of his long biographical notice of Sir William D'Avenant.

Besides the *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, which in spite of its name and the author's original intention, is in English, Wood wrote in Latin a thick folio volume on the antiquities of Oxford.

WILLIAM FULMAN

(From *Athenæ Oxoniensis*, vol. ii., page 823, slightly abridged.)

"Wm. Fulman, son of a sufficient carpenter was born in Penshurst, Kent in 1632 and being a youth of pregnant parts, when the learned Dr. Hammond was parson of that place he took him under his protection and carried him to Oxon and caused him to be carefully educated. (This Dr. Hammond was born in 1605, was graduated in Divinity at Oxford, 1622, and became rector of Penshurst.) Hammond made Fulman his amanuensis and when the political troubles of King Charles reign drove both from Oxford, Fulman obtained through his patron the position of tutor in the 'genteel' family of Peto in Chesterton, Warwickshire where he found a comfortable harbour during the Church of England's disconsolate condition. He

later returned to Oxford where he obtained his degree and a Fellowship. He was a most zealous son of the Church of England and an enemy to Popery and Fanaticism, admirably versed in Ecclesiastical and profane history. Wrote much, published little, was a famous collector and aided in the writing of many books including a History of Charles I., etc.

“At length our learned author, being overtaken with a malignant fever, died in 1688, leaving behind him a heap of collections neatly written in his own hand, but nothing of them perfect, all which, at his desire, were put in the archives of Corpus Christi College; what had it been for those that had the care of them to have permitted the author of this work the perusal of them! when they could not otherwise but know that they would have been serviceable to him in the promotion of this work [*Athenæ Oxoniensis*] now almost ready for the press. But such is the humour of Men of this age, that rather than act a part for the Public Good and honour of learning they 'll suffer choice things to be buried in Oblivion.”

Among these collections (still, by the way, buried in oblivion in the college records) are some notes on the life of Shakespeare agreeing with those set down by Rowe. They are also annotated by another clergyman friend, Dr. Davies, who set down some supplementary information.

Apparently no one has tried to discover any explana-

tion of Dr. Fulman's interest in Shakespeare; but the connection is not hard to find, for in looking up the records of Fulman's friendly patron, Dr. Hammond, it appears that after his ejection by the Puritans from Oxford he entered the service of a family who doubtless had not forgotten Shakespeare; in short, he became Chaplain to Southampton's widow and remained Chaplain to the young Earl until his death in 1660.

Anthony Wood also records that Dr. Hammond collected many of the facts, read the proofs, and greatly aided Bishop Burnet in his *History of the Reformation*.

SIR WILLIAM DAVENANT (1605-1668)

(From Aubrey, vol. i., slightly abridged.)

"Sir William Davenant, knight, Poet Laureate, was born about the end of February 160 $\frac{5}{8}$ in the city of Oxford, at the "Crowne" taverne. His father was John Davenant, a vintner there, a very grave and discreet citizen: his mother was a very beautiful woman, and of very good witt, and of conversation extremely agreeable. They had three sons, viz. Robert, William, and Nicholas (an attorney): and two handsome daughters, one married to Gabriel Bridges another to doctor William Sherborne.

"Mr. William Shakespeare was wont to goe into Warwickshire once a yeare, and did commonly in his

journey, lye at this house in Oxon where he was exceedingly respected. I have heard Parson Robert (Davenant) say that Mr. W. Shakespeare has given him a hundred kisses. Now Sir William would sometimes, when he was pleasant over a glasse of wine with his most intimate friends, *e. g.* Sam Butler author of *Hudibras* etc., say that it seemed to him that he writt with the very spirit that [moved] Shakespeare, and seemed contented enough to be thought his son. He would tell them the story as above, in which way his mother had a very light report.

“He went to schoole at Oxon to Mr. Sylvester, but I feare he was drawne from schoole before he was ripe enough.

“He was preferred to the first dutches of Richmond to wayte on her as a page. He was next, as I remember, a page to Sir Fulke Grevil, Lord Brookes, with whom he lived to his death.

“This Sir Fulke, was a good Witt and had been a good poet in his youth.

“He writt a play or plays, and verses, which he did with soe much sweetnesse and grace that by it he got the love and friendship of his two Mecænasses, Mr. Endymion Porter, and Mr. Henry Jermyn, since Earl of St. Albans to whom he has dedicated his poem called “Madagascar.” Sir John Suckling also was his great and intimate friend. After the death of Ben Jonson he was made in his place, Poet laureat.

“In 1641, when the troubles began, he was faine to

fly into France and at Canterbury he was seized on by the mayor, *vide* Sir John Menis' verses.

And call'd him superstitious groom
 And Popish Dog and Cur of Rome.
 . . . 't was surely the first time
 That Will's religion was a crime.

In the Civill Warres in England, he was in the army of William Marques of Newcastle, since Duke, where he was generall of the Ordnance. I have heard his brother Robert say, that for that service there was owing to him ten thousand pounds. During that warre twas his hap to have two Aldermen of Yorke his prisoners. Sir William used them civilly, and treated them in his tent, and sate them at the upper end of his table *à la mode de France*.

"The King's party being overcome, Sir William Davenant (who received the honour of Knighthood from the Duke of Newcastle by commission) went into France; resided chiefly in Paris, where the Prince of Wales then was. He then began to write his romance in verse, called 'Gondibert.'

"Here he layd an ingeniose designe to carry a considerable number of artificers (chiefly weavers) from hence to Virginia; and by the Queen mother's meanes he got favour from the King of France to goe into the prisons and pick and choose. So when the poor damned wretches understood what the designe was they cried *ūno ore*—'tout tisseran' (we are all weavers). Will took thirty-six as I remember and shipped them;

and as he was on his voyage toward Virginia, he and his tisserans were all taken by the shippes then belonging to the Parliament of England. The slaves, I suppose, they sold, but Sir William was brought prisoner to England. His 'Gondibert' was finished at Carisbroke castle. He had no hopes of escaping with his life. It pleased God that the two aldermen of Yorke aforesaid hearing that he was tryed for his life, which they understood to be in extreme danger, they were touched with so much generosity and goodness, as upon their mere motion, the Parliament upon their petition etc. Sir William's life was saved. (Twas Harry Martyn that saved Sir William Davenant's life in the howse. When they were talking of sacrificeing one, then said Henry, 'That in sacrifices they always offered pure and without blemish, now ye talke of making a sacrifice of an old rotten rascall.')

"Being freed from imprisonment (because tragedies and comedies were, in those presbyterian times, scandalous), he contrives to set up an Opera *stylo recitativo*. It began at Rutland-House, next at the Cock pit in Drury Lane, where were acted very well *Sir Francis Drake* and the *Siege of Rhodes*. It did affect the eie and eare extremely. This first brought scenes in fashion in England; before, at plays, was only a hanging.

"In 1660 was the happy restoration of His Majesty King Charles. The Tennis Court in Lincoln's Inn fields was turned into a Play House for the Duke of

Yorke's players, where Sir William had lodgings, and where he dyed, April the 7th, 1668. I was at his funerall. He had a coffin of Walnut-tree, the finest I ever saw. His body was carried on a herse from the play-house to Westminster Abbey. His grave is in the South crosse aisle, on which on a paving stone of marble, is writt, in imitation of that on Ben Jonson, '*O rare Sir Will. Davenant.*' His eldest son is Charles Davenant, LLD. who inherits his father's beauty and phancy, he practises at Doctor's Commons. He hath writt a play called *Circe* which hath taken well."

THE END

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